



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

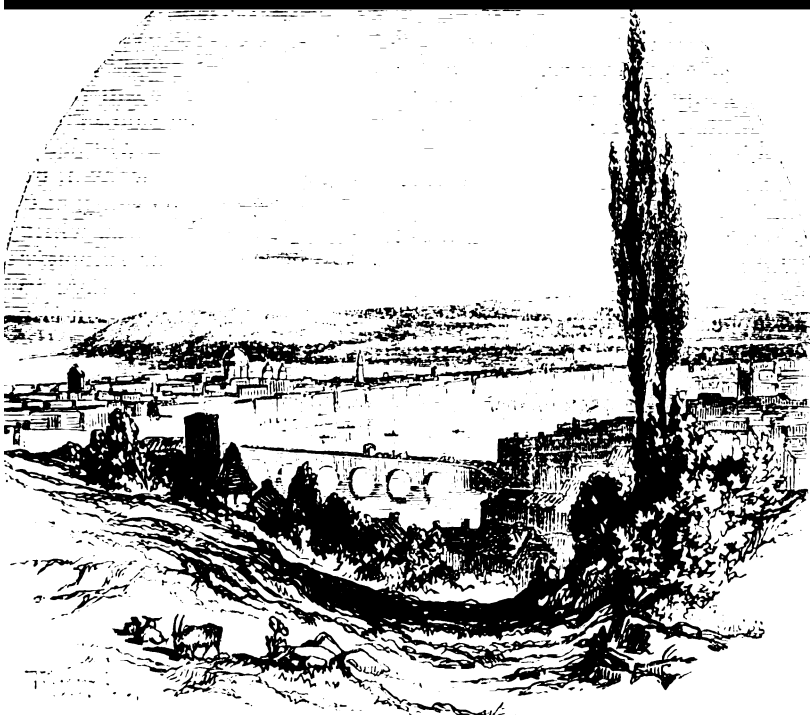
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



*Chambers's Repository of  
Instructive and Amusing Tracts*

0930  
.251  
v.9

~~0930.251 v.9~~

Library of



Princeton University.

Elizabeth Foundation.







# CHAMBERS'S REPOSITORY.



CHAMBERS'S  
...  
**REPOSITORY**  
OF  
INSTRUCTIVE AND AMUSING  
**TRACTS**



LONDON & EDINBURGH,  
WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS



CHAMBERS'S  
...  
**REPOSITORY**  
OF  
INSTRUCTIVE AND AMUSING  
**TRACTS**



LONDON & EDINBURGH,  
WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS



## CONTENTS OF VOLUME IX.

---

THE FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, . . .	NO. 65
WILLIAM COBBETT, . . . . .	" 66
ALICE HOFFMANN: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, . . . . .	" 67
TOUR IN AUVERGNE, . . . . .	" 68
SHIPWRECKS, . . . . .	" 69
THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS: A TALE, . . . . .	" 70
MADAME DE STAËL, . . . . .	" 71
LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN, . . . . .	" 72

**(RECAP)**

0930  
251  
V.9

87691



**EDINBURGH :**  
**PRINTED BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS.**

**1854.**



## CHAMBERS'S REPOSITORY.



### THE FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

**F**ROM the earliest period of the history of America, two leading objects of commercial gain, giving birth in their pursuit to wide and daring enterprise, have exerted a marked and abiding influence on the progress of discovery and civilisation in that vast continent: these are the precious metals of the south, and the rich peltries of the north. While the fiery and magnificent Spaniard, inflamed with the mania of gold, was extending his discoveries and conquests over the brilliant countries of the south, scorched by the ardent sun of the tropics,

No. 65. 1

the adroit and buoyant Frenchman, and the sturdy and energetic Briton were pursuing the less splendid, but hardly less lucrative traffic in furs, and amidst the gigantic forests and perennial snows of the north, laying the foundation, if of a less brilliant and attractive, yet of a more extensive and enduring empire.

These two pursuits have been, in fact, everywhere the pioneers and precursors of civilisation in the New World. 'Without pausing on the borders,' says Washington Irving in his interesting narrative of *Astoria*, 'they have penetrated at once, in defiance of difficulties and dangers, to the heart of savage countries; laying open the hidden secrets of the wilderness, leading the way to remote regions of beauty and fertility, that might have remained unexplored for ages, and beckoning after them the slow and pausing steps of agriculture and civilisation.' It was the fur-trade, in fact, affording early sustenance and vitality to the first English and French settlements in America, which, being destitute of the precious metals, were long neglected by the parent countries, that may with justice be said to have laid the foundation of that magnificent empire, which, whether under the name of the United States or of **British America**, forms, at this day, the splendid appanage of the Anglo-Saxon race in the New World.

The records of an enterprise marked by so many traits of adventure, privation, and dauntless energy, would doubtless possess many elements of romantic interest; but the exploits of the hardy and adventurous individuals to whom it owes its existence are unchronicled. No **Robertson** or **Prescott** has recorded them. Their memory has long passed away with the circumstances of the period and situation which produced them. To bring together what scattered notices are still accessible of the rise, progress, and present condition of this adventurous traffic, and of a state of things which is now fast disappearing, will form an interesting, and instructive task, which it is our object to attempt in the following pages.

At the period of the first colonisation of America by Europeans, all that territory which extends eastward from the Mississippi to the Atlantic, and northward from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson's Bay, appears to have been one vast and unbroken forest. This immense area, embracing the greater part of the present United States, and British America east of the great lakes, was then, as a considerable portion of it is still, little more than an extensive haunt of wild beasts. In the security of such undisturbed retreats, these creatures had multiplied incalculably, the few native tribes who roamed over this wilderness, without flocks or tame animals, having left unlimited scope and provision for the animal race, wandering and free like themselves. With few wants, and these easily supplied, it was not until our luxury had led us to adopt the use of furs as costly appendages to dress, that the natives commenced that war of extermination against the animal tribes

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

which has ever since continued. The destructive industry with which this, when once begun, was followed up, soon brought into the ports of France and England vast quantities of furs, some of which were consumed there, and the rest disposed of in the neighbouring countries. Most of these furs were already known in Europe: they came from the northern parts of our own hemisphere, but in too small quantities to bring them into general use. Caprice and novelty, however, brought them more or less into fashion, since it was found that it was for the interest of the American colonies that they should be admired in the mother-countries.

## THE FUR-TRADE IN CANADA UNDER THE FRENCH.

Whether from the favourable situation of their settlements along the banks of the St Lawrence, in the very heart of the fur countries, or from the congeniality of the pursuit itself to the character and habits of that volatile and restless race, it is certain that the French soon acquired, and for a considerable period retained, a superiority in the fur-trade over other European nations in America. From time to time, our own intrepid navigators, employed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the ineffectual search for the north-west passage, had brought home specimens of the valuable furs which the northern portion of the American continent contained. But the first regular and permanent traffic with the Indians, appears to have been opened up about the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the French colony, at Tadousac, a post situated on the St Lawrence about thirty leagues below the present town of Quebec. The large profits arising from this commerce, and the advantages to be derived from its more extended and systematic prosecution, did not escape the vigilant and sagacious eye of Cardinal Richelieu, then at the head of affairs in France. To give effect to the views he entertained on this subject, he originated, about the year 1628, under his own immediate auspices, an extensive association under the name of *La Compagnie de la Nouvelle France* (*New France*), being the name by which the somewhat indefinite possessions of the French in America were at that time distinguished. To this association, which consisted of 700 copartners, including in their number some of the most distinguished men of the time in France, various important privileges were granted. The king made a present of two large ships to the company, and twelve of the principal members were raised to the rank of nobility. They had the disposal of the settlements that were, or should be formed in New France, with the power of fortifying and governing them as they thought proper; and of making war or peace as should best promote their interests. The whole trade by land and sea, 'from the river St Lawrence to the Arctic Circle and the Frozen Ocean,' was made over to them for a term of fifteen years, except the cod and whale

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

fisheries, which were left open to all French subjects. The beaver and all the fur-trade was granted to the company for ever. In return for such extensive concessions, the company, which had a capital of 100,000 crowns, engaged to bring into the colony during the first year of their incorporation, 200 or 300 artificers, of such trades as were fitted for their purpose; and 16,000 men before the year 1643. They were to find them in lodging and board, and to maintain them for three years, and afterwards to give them as much cleared land as might be necessary for their subsistence; together with a sufficient quantity of grain to sow it for the first year. A leading object of the company's incorporation was represented to be the propagation of Christianity among the native Indians; and with this view the most liberal provision was made for a numerous staff of missionaries, who accompanied the first settlers to the new colony.

Fortune, however, did not second the endeavours of government in favour of the new association. The first ships fitted out by them were taken by the English, who were lately embroiled with the French on account of the siege of Rochelle. Other disasters speedily followed; the monopolising company fulfilled none of their engagements; and the colonists, becoming clamorous in their complaints against the arbitrary measures and abuses of their administration, one after another of the privileges granted to the company had to be modified or recalled. It was found impossible to enforce the restrictions imposed upon the trade with the Indians, and these soon came, therefore, to be practically regarded by the colonists as a dead letter. Finally, the association itself, unable to accomplish any of the objects for which it had been established, was formally dissolved.

Freed from the incubus of the company's monopoly, the adventurers settled on the banks of the St Lawrence gave full scope to their roving propensities and their love of adventure. Allured by the enormous profits to be derived from the traffic with the Indians, and the unbridled licence of a savage life, these daring and hardy individuals penetrated for hundreds of miles into the wilderness, then, as now, known in Canada as the Indian Country. As the valuable furs soon grew scarce in the neighbourhood of the settlements, the Indians of the vicinity were stimulated to make a wider range in their hunting excursions. They were generally accompanied in these expeditions by some of the traders or their dependents, appropriately named *coureurs des bois*, or rangers of the woods, who shared in the toils and privations of the chase, and at the same time made themselves acquainted with the best hunting and trapping grounds, and with the remote tribes, whom they encouraged to bring their peltries to the settlements.

In this way the trade was augmented, and drawn from remote quarters to Montreal, where, in process of time, all the fur-trade of the colony centered. From this point the traders, ever in quest

of new fields of adventure and profit, ascended the St Lawrence and Ottawa rivers to their sources, and formed establishments on the Great Lakes. From the north-western end of Lake Superior, they threaded the intricate communication which leads by lakes, rivers, and portages to Lake Winnipeg, and from thence penetrated some distance up the great stream of the Saskatchewan, 'the Mississippi of the north.' Their most distant establishment was on the banks of that river, in latitude 53 degrees north, and longitude 103 degrees west. This place was situated at a distance of upwards of 2000 miles from the colonised part of Canada; the route to it was through a country occupied by numerous savage tribes, where the means of subsistence were scanty, and the navigation unfit for any other craft than frail birch-rind canoes. Yet we have evidence that 'at this distant establishment considerable improvements were effected; that agriculture was carried on, and even wheel-carriages used; in fact, that they then possessed fully as many of the attendants of civilisation as the Hudson's Bay Company do now, after the lapse of a century.'\* The author of *Astoria* presents us with a lively picture of those palmy days of the French fur-trade in Canada:—'Every now and then, a large body of Ottawas, Hurons, and other tribes who hunted the countries bordering on the great lakes, would come down in a squadron of light canoes, laden with beaver-skins and other spoils of their year's hunting. The canoes would be unladen, taken on shore, and their contents disposed in order. A camp of birch-bark would be pitched outside of the town, and a kind of primitive fair opened, with that grave ceremonial so dear to the Indians. An audience would be demanded of the governor-general, who would hold the conference with becoming state, seated in an elbow-chair, with the Indians ranged in semicircles before him, seated on the ground, and silently smoking their pipes. Speeches would be made, presents exchanged, and the audience would break up in universal good-humour.

'Now would ensue a brisk traffic with the merchants, and all Montreal would be alive with naked Indians running from shop to shop, bargaining for arms, kettles, knives, axes, blankets, bright-coloured cloths, and other articles of use or fancy; upon all which, says an old French writer, the merchants were sure to clear at least 200 per cent. There was no money used in this traffic, and after a time, all payment in spirituous liquors was prohibited, in consequence of the frantic and frightful excesses and bloody brawls which they were apt to occasion.

'Their wants and caprices being supplied, they would take leave of the governor, strike their tents, launch their canoes, and ply their way up the Ottawa to the lakes. . . . The French merchant at his trading-post, in these primitive days of Canada, was a kind of commercial patriarch. With the lax habits and easy

\* *Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic Discoverer.*

familiarity of his race, he had a little world of self-indulgence and misrule around him. He had his clerks, canoe-men, and retainers of all kinds, who lived with him on terms of perfect sociability, always calling him by his Christian name. He had his harem of Indian beauties, and his troop of half-breed children; nor was there ever wanting a louting train of Indians hanging about the establishment, eating and drinking at his expense in the intervals of their hunting expeditions.'

It is not necessary to investigate the cause, but experience has shewn, that it requires much less time for a civilised people to degenerate into the manners and customs of savage life, than for savages to rise into a state of civilisation. Such was the event with the *coureurs des bois*, who, after accompanying the natives on their hunting and trading excursions, became so attached to the Indian mode of life, that they lost all relish for their former habits and native homes. For this very reason, however, these pedlers of the wilderness were extremely useful to the merchants engaged in the fur-trade, who freely supplied them with the necessary credit to proceed in their trading excursions. Three or four of these people would join stock, embark their property in a birch-bark canoe, which they worked themselves, and making their way up the mazy rivers that interlace the vast forests of Canada, commit themselves fearlessly to the first tribe of Indians they encountered. Sometimes they sojourned for months among them, assimilating to their tastes and habits with the happy facility of Frenchmen, adopting, in some degree, the Indian dress, and not unfrequently taking to themselves Indian wives. These voyages would extend often to twelve or fifteen months, when they would return in full glee down the Ottawa, their canoes loaded with rich cargoes of furs, and followed by great numbers of the natives. Now would ensue a period of revelry and dissipation, a continued round of drinking, gaming, feasting, and extravagant prodigality, which sufficed in a few weeks to dissipate all their gains, when they would start upon a fresh adventure, to be followed by fresh scenes of riot and extravagance.

The influence of such conduct and example could not but be pernicious to the native Indians, impeding the labours of the missionaries among them, and bringing into scandal and disrepute the character of the Christian religion among those natives who had become converts to it. As a check upon these loose adventurers, the missionaries prevailed upon the government to prohibit, under severe penalties, all persons from trading into the interior of the country without a licence. These licences were at first granted only to persons whose character could give no alarm to the zeal of the missionaries, but they came in time to be bestowed as rewards for services to officers and their widows, and others, who having the power of selling them again to the merchants, who again, in their turn, employed the *coureurs des bois* as their agents, the abuses of the old system were very soon revived and continued as

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

flagrant as before. At length, military posts were established at the confluence of the principal lakes and rivers of Canada, which in a great measure restrained the excesses of these marauders of the wilderness, and at the same time protected the trade. The persons in charge of these posts frequently engaged in the traffic themselves, under their own licences, having in most cases the exclusive privilege of buying and selling in the districts under their command, and combining their views with those of the missionaries, restored some degree of order and regularity to the trade, at the same time that they secured the respect of the natives. To distinguish themselves from the traders, they assumed the name of 'Commanders,' though they were, in fact, entitled to both these characters. As for the missionaries, they appear to have laboured most zealously and assiduously in the great work they had undertaken, receiving from the first the most cordial aid and encouragement both from the government and the colonists. Indeed, it is but justice to the French to state, that during their tenure of the fur-trade, the interest they displayed in the welfare of the aborigines furnishes a humiliating contrast to the conduct of our own government, or rather of the great trading association by whom their functions have been exercised since the traffic has passed into our hands. 'The whole of their long route,' says Sir Alexander Mackenzie, speaking of these missionaries, and of the neglect into which the missions had fallen in his time (toward the end of the last century), when the fur-trade had passed into the hands of the British — 'the whole of their long route I have often travelled; and the recollection of such a people as the missionaries having been there, was confined to a few superannuated Canadians, who had not left that country since the cession to the English in 1763, and who particularly mentioned the death of some, and the distressing situation of them all. Though these religious men did not attain the objects of their persevering piety, they were, during their mission, of great service to the French commanders who engaged in those distant expeditions, and spread the fur-trade as far west as the banks of the Saskatchewan River.'

## RISE OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

The fur-trade of Canada had for a long time to sustain a keen competition from the British and Dutch settlers of New York, who inveigled the *coureurs des bois* and the Indians to their trading-posts, and traded with them on more favourable terms. In the absence of any regular organisation, however, among these settlers, the isolated and desultory efforts of individual traders served rather to keep alive the spirit of activity and enterprise among the French, than in any very permanent or considerable degree to affect the extensive and important traffic which had now grown up under their hands. But in the year 1669, another and a



more formidable opposition sprang up in a new and unexpected quarter.

A few years before this date, M. de Groiseliez, an inhabitant of Canada, a bold and enterprising man, and one who had travelled extensively among the Indians, had pushed his discoveries so far, that he reached the coasts of Hudson's Bay from the French settlements by land. On his return, he prevailed upon the authorities at Quebec to fit out a vessel for perfecting this discovery by sea, which led in the same year to the establishment of the first European settlement on the shores of Hudson's Bay, at the mouth of Nelson River—near the site of the present York Factory—to which the French gave the name of Fort Bourbon. Some subsequent difference with his employers led to Groiseliez's abandoning his establishment, and proceeding to France, where, finding his representations as ill received as they had been in Canada, he was induced to lay his proposals for opening a trade in Hudson's Bay before the Duke of Montague, then our minister in France, who, entering warmly into the project, despatched Groiseliez, with his brother-in-law, M. Radisson, who had accompanied him from Canada, at once to England, with a recommendation to Prince Rupert, then the great patron of all enterprises of this nature. From Prince Rupert our adventurers received every encouragement. A small vessel, the *Nonsuch*, under the command of Captain Zachariah Gillam, with the Frenchmen on board, was sent into Hudson's Bay under the prince's auspices, in the summer of 1668, and in the same year established, at the mouth of Rupert's River, at the southern extremity of the bay, the first English settlement, to which Captain Gillam gave the name of Fort Charles. This led in the following year to the incorporation of the adventurers into a company, by a charter from King Charles II., dated 2d May 1669; and thus was instituted the Hudson's Bay Company, destined in time to exercise over the wintry lakes and boundless forests of the north, a sway equalled only by that of the East India Company over the voluptuous climes and magnificent realms of the East. This charter—which continues to the present day to confer upon the Company whatever legal right it may possess to the monopoly it has so long exercised over the fur-trade of British North America—appears to have been as nearly as possible an unconscious counterpart of that of Cardinal Richelieu's Association. In the same loose and ignorant phraseology, it grants to the Company immense territories, the situation and extent of which were at the time entirely unknown, but which, strictly interpreted, enables the Company to claim at the present day, in the language of one of its governors before a recent parliamentary committee, 'the country all the way from the boundaries of Lower and Upper Canada, away to the north pole as far as the land goes; and from the Labrador coast all the way to the Pacific Ocean'—that is, a territory considerably greater than the entire area of the continent of Europe! Such grants

were common enough in those days; but this charter of the Hudson's Bay Company is perhaps unique in this respect—that it subsists in full vigour to the present time, in all its literal and venerable absurdity, and forms the sole title by which a few merchants in London have retained for nearly two centuries the entire monopoly of the fur-trade of British North America—a commerce, in proportion to its extent, the most lucrative perhaps in the world.

The privileges granted by the charter of King Charles II., on the right understanding of which some of the most important passages in the Company's history have turned, are of three distinct kinds:—

1st. The privilege of exclusive trade throughout certain territories which the charter professes to describe, and which it calls Rupert's Land.

2d. The property and lordship of the soil of Rupert's Land.

3d. The privilege of exclusive trade with all the countries into which the Company might find access by land or water out of Rupert's Land.

To these privileges there were but two drawbacks: 1st.. The charter received no parliamentary sanction or confirmation, without which no grant of exclusive trade can be valid—a defect on which we shall have to touch again presently. 2d. The territories granted to the Company by the charter had been already, as we have seen, granted by the French king to the Company of New France, of which Hudson's Bay and the adjacent countries formed an integral portion; and as the charter itself expressly reserved the 'possession of any other Christian prince or state,' it was not unreasonably argued by the French, that it carried on its face its own abrogation. In reply to this objection, it was stoutly maintained that the country around Hudson's Bay formed no part of the continent of North America at all—a view in which it appears the advocates of the Company were not without respectable authority to support them. 'Surely I need not tell you,' writes Mr Oldenburg, the first secretary of the Royal Society, to the celebrated Mr Boyle, 'what is said here with great joy of the discovery of a north-west passage, made by two English and one Frenchman, lately represented by them to his majesty at Oxford, and answered by a royal grant of a vessel to sail into Hudson's Bay, and thence into the South Sea; these men affirming, as I heard, that with a boat they went out of a lake in Canada into a river, *which discharged itself north-west into the South Sea, into which they went, and returned north-east into Hudson's Bay!*'

Meanwhile, pending these discussions, the French, alarmed at the prospect of an opposition in a quarter which threatened to cut off the most valuable part of their trade, resolved on taking active measures for expelling the new-comers as interlopers. Their fears of the result of the English settlement upon their trade had been confirmed by the unanimous testimony of the *coureurs des bois*, who by this time had established a regular intercourse by land

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

between the Indians on the borders of the Straits and the French settlements on the St Lawrence. It would have been a desirable thing to have gone by the same road to attack the new colony; but the distance being thought too considerable, notwithstanding the convenience of the rivers, it was at length determined that an expedition against the new settlements should be undertaken by sea. The conduct of it was intrusted to Groiselliez and Radisson, who had been easily brought back to a regard for their country.

These two bold and restless men sailed from Quebec in 1682, in two vessels badly fitted out; but, on their arrival, finding themselves not strong enough to attack the enemy, they were contented with erecting a fort in the neighbourhood of that they thought to have taken. From this time there began a rivalry between the two companies—one settled in Canada and the other in England—for the exclusive trade of the Bay, which was constantly fed by the disputes it gave birth to, till at last, after each of their settlements had been frequently taken by the other, hostilities were terminated by the Treaty of Ryswick, signed in September 1697, the eighth section of which provided that commissioners should be appointed to settle the pretensions of the English and French to the trade of Hudson's Bay. By this treaty the claims of the French to the best portion of the Bay were definitely acknowledged, and up to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714, they appear to have enjoyed undisturbed possession of nearly the whole of the trade of the disputed territories.

There is but little information respecting the proceedings of the English Company in the interval, but there is reason to believe that their situation was by no means a prosperous one. The defect in their charter, arising from the absence of any confirmation by parliament, has been already noticed. It was found impossible, without this confirmation, to exclude interlopers from the territories claimed under the grant of King Charles II. At least we find this the ground of a petition from the Company to parliament in 1690, for an act to confirm their charter. The confirmation was granted, but for 'seven years only, and no longer.' On the expiration of the Act of Confirmation in 1697, another application was made for its renewal, which was this time either negatived or withdrawn by the Company themselves, for they have, from that time to the present, continued to trade upon their unconfirmed charter. It seemed probable, in view of these repeated disasters, that the English Company was destined to share the fate of its French prototype; but the Treaty of Utrecht in 1712 changed once more the fortunes of the snow-clad regions of Hudson's Bay.

Louis XIV., after a series of defeats and mortifications—the ignominious close of a long reign of glory and prosperity—was still happy that he could, in his old age, purchase peace by sacrifices which denoted his humiliation. But he seemed to wish to conceal these sacrifices from his people, by making them chiefly beyond the sea. Among the possessions ceded to the English, after the

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

long wars rendered memorable in our annals by the victories of Marlborough, and terminated by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1712, were Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Hudson's Bay. A special clause of the treaty provided that all French subjects should evacuate the Bay within six months after its ratification. A clear field was thus opened for the operations of the English Company, which they lost no time in securing. Two courses were now open to them: either to petition for a grant of the ceded territories, or obtain a confirmation and extension of their original charter, so as to include them; or quietly to take possession of the abandoned trading-posts, and establish such a footing in the country and the trade as would prevent or overawe all competition. The latter course they resolved, without doubt wisely, on adopting. Their policy henceforth, accordingly, was, and continues to be to this day, to shroud their transactions in the most impenetrable mystery—to assert on all occasions the rights of their charter, except where there was a prospect of its validity being submitted to a legal test, in which case they have always given way—and, above all, to circulate the impression among the public, that the whole of the immense territory under their sway was a frozen wilderness, where human life could with difficulty be sustained, and which was fit only for the purpose to which they applied it—of a gigantic preserve for wild animals.

In pursuance of this policy, we find the history of the Company for the next forty years almost a perfect blank. It would be difficult to find a book of the period, or a printed document of any kind in our own language, in which even the name occurs. What information we possess of their proceedings is derived indirectly from the accounts of the French, who, cut off from intercourse with the Bay, kept up an active opposition in the interior from the settlements which remained to them on the St Lawrence. From these accounts, it appears that, up to the middle of the eighteenth century, the Company had scarcely made any advance into the interior; and that, up to this time, their trading-stations were confined almost entirely to the coast. Such an absence of energy and enterprise in a company possessing, or supposed to possess, so many enviable privileges, did not fail to provoke injurious comparisons between them and the free settlers of Canada, who, it was alleged, had been allowed, through the supineness of the English monopoly, to engross the most valuable portion of the trade of even our own territories. At last, in 1748, public attention was directed to the subject by a motion in parliament for an inquiry into the state of the trade to Hudson's Bay. The result was the appointment of a committee of the House of Commons, the publication of whose Report, still preserved among the parliamentary papers, appears to have excited a perfect storm of execration among the commercial community of the time. Making every allowance for the peculiarly fervid and truly English hatred manifested by the public of this country at all

times against monopolies, it must be admitted that some of the revelations brought to light by this committee, were such as to give ample ground for the popular indignation they called forth.

As bearing upon the history of the Company, it will be sufficient here to notice one of the numerous charges preferred against them at that time, as it throws some light on the profits derived from the fur-trade at that early period. The charge was that of having made a false return of the amount of capital employed in the trade to Hudson's Bay, which the Company stated as L.103,500, while the only real subscribed capital was L.13,650. It appears that the original capital subscribed was L.10,500; and that, in consequence of the enormous profits realised, the Company trebled their stock in 1690—that is, they passed a vote by which the stock of the Company was declared to be L.31,500; and the object seems to have been, that the dividends might appear to be smaller upon a larger nominal capital, than upon the original subscribed capital of L.10,500.

Continued prosperity, after the Treaty of Utrecht had thrown the trade of Hudson's Bay into their hands, enabled the Company to perform a similar trick in 1720. In this year the capital was declared to be again trebled, and to amount to L.94,500. It was then proposed to add three times as much to it by subscription; but in this way, that each proprietor subscribing L.100 should receive L.300 of stock; so that the nominal stock should amount to L.378,000, the real additional sum subscribed being L.94,500. This plan was frustrated by the difficulty at the time of procuring money, and only L.3150 was subscribed. Nevertheless, the whole capital of the Company was ordered to be reckoned at L.103,500, whilst the only subscribed capital, as previously stated, was L.13,650.

The tactics by which the Company supplemented the defects of their charter, and kept out rival traders, are largely detailed in the Report. They appear to have consisted chiefly in fomenting animosities and divisions among the Indian tribes of the interior, that none might be tempted to engage in the trade in that quarter to their disadvantage. Two cases are mentioned, in which ships had attempted to penetrate into Hudson's Bay for the purpose of trade by sea. These ships the Company seized, and ran on shore, where they were lost, pleading in their defence, on an action for recovery and damages, that they had been lost by stress of weather! We are writing, it must be remembered, of the Hudson's Bay Company of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and of the morality of an age in which the slave-trade was a legitimate and honourable employment for the merchants of England. We gladly turn from such incidents to a brighter page in the history of the fur-trade.

## CESSION OF CANADA, AND RISE OF THE NORTH-WEST COMPANY.

It is doubtful whether the Hudson's Bay Company could have long survived the stormy crisis of 1748, under their original constitution, but for the opportune breaking out of the great Colonial War with France, which, among other results, produced, under the splendid administration of the elder Pitt, the conquest and cession of Canada to the English. A new direction was thus given to the enterprise of British subjects, by the abandonment into their hands of the extensive traffic with the Indians, established and so long successfully conducted by the French. An interval of several years elapsed, however, owing probably to an ignorance of the country in the conquerors, and their want of commercial confidence in the conquered, before the new adventurers were able to take full advantage of the opening thus afforded them. There were, indeed, other discouragements—such as the immense length of the journeys necessary to reach the limits where the traffic could be profitably undertaken; the risk of property from the hostility of the natives towards the new-comers; and an ignorance of the language of those who, from their experience, must be necessarily employed as the intermediate agents between them and the Indians. It was not until the year 1766 that the trade regained its old channels; but it was then pursued with much avidity and emulation by individual traders, and soon overstepped its former bounds. In 1781, it had reached the limits of Lake Athabasca, nearly 1000 miles beyond the most distant point attained by the French. The Hudson's Bay Company, in the meantime, pursuing their former inactive policy, had remained nearly stationary round the shores of the Bay; but, alarmed at the progress of the Canadian traders, they quickly perceived that against opponents whom no territorial limits could restrain within the bounds of their French predecessors, a more energetic course of action was essential to the existence of even their own limited trade. About the year 1774, they accordingly made their first considerable move to the westward, and henceforth adopted the policy of vigorously contesting the trade with their Canadian rivals.

An animated competition now commenced between the contending parties, imbibed as usual by rivalries and jealousies, and the petty artifices employed to outbid and undermine each other with the Indians. Spirituous liquors, the issue of which under the French government had been strictly prohibited, were now introduced as an article of traffic—first by the traders from the Bay, when, in self-defence, the Canadians were compelled to do the same. The result was, in a short time, the utter disorganisation of the trade, and the demoralisation not only of the natives but of the traders themselves.

To put an end to the scandalous and ruinous contentions arising

out of this unprincipled competition, the leading individuals in Canada, concerned in the commerce, entered into a partnership in the winter of 1783, under the name of the North-west Company of Montreal—a name famous in the annals of the fur-trade, and which, from small beginnings, rose in a very few years to be the most powerful, energetic, and successful association which had hitherto engaged in the trade. At first, it was nothing more than a voluntary association of the most respectable merchants interested in the fur-trade, many of whom were engaged at the same time in other extensive concerns altogether foreign to it; but it soon assumed a more regular organisation. The concern was then divided into twenty shares, some of which were held by the persons who managed the business in Canada, and were called agents, and the remainder by proprietors, who wintered in the Indian country, and managed the trade with the natives, and were hence called 'wintering partners.' It was the duty of the agents to import the necessary goods from England, store them up in warehouses in Montreal, and prepare them for being sent into the interior. They were likewise expected to advance any cash that might be wanting for the outfits, for which they received a commission, independent of their share of the profits. Lastly, they received, packed up, and shipped the company's furs for England, to the proper agents to whom they were intrusted for sale, on which they had also a small commission. The wintering partners were not under any obligation to furnish capital; but as it was upon their energy, tact, and experience, that the prosperity of the association mainly depended, they were required to go through a strict probation before they could arrive at that enviable station. They were selected, in the first instance, from respectable families in Canada—generally Scotch emigrants—and entered the company's service under an apprenticeship for seven years, during which they received L.100 sterling, were maintained at the expense of the company, and furnished with suitable clothing and equipments. This probation was generally passed at the interior trading-posts, where they were removed for years from civilised society, leading a life almost as wild and precarious as the savages around them; but acquiring in the meantime a perfect knowledge of the Indian character, and of the resources of the country in which they lived. On the expiration of their apprenticeship, they received a salary of L.100 per annum, and were then eligible, on a vacancy, to promotion to a partnership, according to their merits and services. With ordinary good conduct, there were few young men who entered the service who found their reasonable expectations in this respect disappointed. No system, perhaps, could have been better devised for infusing activity into every department, and so extending the influence of the company, which was soon indeed practically demonstrated by the rapid prosperity to which it speedily attained. 'In 1788,' says Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 'the gross amount of the adventure

for the year did not exceed L.40,000; but by the exertion, enterprise, and industry of the proprietors, it was brought in eleven years to triple that amount and upwards—yielding proportionate profits, and surpassing, in short, anything known in America.'

The agents who presided over the affairs of the company at head-quarters, were of course personages of great weight and importance in the concern. Consisting, in at least the later years of the company, chiefly of veteran partners and traders who had gained distinction in the rough campaigns of the north, they were a class *sui generis*, living in lordly and hospitable style, and forming a sort of commercial aristocracy in the society of Quebec and Montreal. It was during the palmy days of the company, while on a short visit to Canada, that Washington Irving had an opportunity of witnessing something of the feudal magnificence which characterised the proceedings of these magnates of the North-west, and of which he has left us, in *Astoria*, a lively sketch. 'To behold the North-west Company in all its state and grandeur,' says he, 'it was necessary to witness an annual gathering at the great interior place of conference, established at Fort-William, near what is called the Grand Portage, on Lake Superior. Here, two or three of the leading partners from Montreal proceeded once a year to meet the partners from the various trading-posts of the wilderness, to discuss the affairs of the company during the preceding year, and to arrange plans for the future.

'On these occasions might be seen the change since the uncere-monious times of the old French traders—now the aristocratical character of the Briton shone forth magnificently, or rather the feudal spirit of the Highlander. Every partner who had charge of an interior post, and a score of retainers at his command, felt like the chieftain of a Highland clan, and was almost as important in the eyes of his dependents as of himself. To him a visit to the grand conference at Fort William was a most important event, and he repaired there as to a meeting of parliament. The partners from Montreal, however, were the lords of the ascendant. Coming from the midst of luxurious and ostentatious life, they quite eclipsed their compeers from the woods, whose forms and faces had been battered and hardened by hard living and hard service, and whose garments and equipments were all the worse for wear. Indeed, the partners from below considered the whole dignity of the company as represented in their own persons, and conducted themselves in suitable style. They ascended the rivers in great state, like sovereigns making a progress, or rather like Highland chieftains navigating their subject lakes. They were wrapped in rich furs, their huge canoes freighted with every convenience and luxury, and manned by Canadian voyageurs as obedient as Highland clansmen. They carried up with them cooks and bakers, together with delicacies of every kind, and abundance of choice wines for the banquet which attended this great convocation. Happy were they, too, if they could meet with any distinguished



stranger—above all, some titled member of the British nobility—to accompany them on this stately occasion, and grace their high solemnities. Fort William, the scene of this important annual meeting, was a considerable village on the banks of Lake Superior. Here, in an immense wooden building, was the great council-hall, as also the banqueting-chamber, decorated with Indian arms and accoutrements, and the trophies of the fur-trade. The house swarmed at this time with traders and voyageurs from Montreal bound to the interior posts, and some from the interior posts bound to Montreal. The councils were held in great state; for every member felt as if sitting in parliament, and every retainer and dependent looked up to the assemblage with awe as to the House of Lords. There was a vast deal of solemn deliberation and hard Scottish reasoning, with an occasional swell of pompous declamation. These grave and weighty councils were alternated by huge feasts and revels, like some of the old feasts described in Highland castles. The tables in the great banqueting-room groaned under the weight of game of all kinds—of venison from the woods and fish from the lakes, with hunter's delicacies, such as buffaloes' tongues and beavers' tails, and various luxuries from Montreal, all served up by experienced cooks brought for the purpose. There was no stint of generous wine, for it was a hard-drinking period—a time of loyal toasts and Bacchanalian song and brimming bumpers.

'While the chiefs thus revelled in the hall, and made the rafters resound with bursts of loyalty and old Scottish songs, chanted in voices cracked and sharpened by the northern blast, their merriment was echoed and prolonged by a mongrel legion of retainers—Canadian voyageurs, half-breed Indian hunters, and vagabond hangers-on—who feasted sumptuously without, on the crumbs from their table, and made the welkin ring with old French ditties, mingled with Indian yelps and yellings.

'One or two partners,' he adds, 'recently from the interior posts, would occasionally make their appearance in New York in the course of a tour of pleasure or curiosity. On these occasions, there was always a degree of magnificence of the purse about them, and a peculiar propensity to expenditure at the goldsmiths' and jewellers' for rings, chains, brooches, necklaces, jewelled watches, and other rich trinkets, partly for their own wear, partly for presents to their female acquaintances—a gorgeous prodigality, such as was often noticed in former times in West Indian planters and Eastern nabobs flush with the spoils of Oriental conquest.'

Such were the results which, in a few years, marked the prosperity of this energetic association. In an incredibly short period, the whole of the immense region, extending from the confines of Canada to Slave Lake on the north, and the Pacific Ocean on the west, was studded by the remote posts of the company, where they carried on their traffic with the surrounding tribes. Their trade appears to have taken this direction, in the first instance, chiefly with the view of appropriating and extending that of their

French predecessors. They were influenced, no doubt, likewise by a desire to leave the Hudson's Bay Company unmolested in the comparatively narrow sphere to which they had hitherto confined their operations in the country immediately surrounding the Bay. The latter had, however, as previously stated, already commenced moving their posts westward. This soon brought the two companies into collision, and a keen competition now commenced, which, confined at first to their respective outposts, soon spread over the greater part of the country east of the Rocky Mountains. Such a competition, carried on in a country remote from civilisation and the restraints of law, could scarcely fail to be marked by many revolting scenes of rapacity and violence. Personal conflicts with fists between the men, and not unfrequently between the clerks and partners of the rival companies, were of the commonest occurrence, and not unfrequently more deadly weapons were employed. Stratagem was, however, more frequently resorted to than open violence. In ignorance of the value of the furs, which formed the object of such eager contention, the hunts of the Indian were generally at the disposal of the first trader who reached his encampment. On both sides, men were constantly kept on the look-out for parties of natives returning from their hunting expeditions, whose duty it was to waylay them, and ply them with fire-water, and 'all the arts of cozenage,' until every skin had been obtained from them, if possible, before the opposite party could arrive at the scene.

As the rival trading-posts were generally built within 200 or 300 yards of each other, it was by no means easy for either party to steal a march upon the other. Mr Ballantyne relates an anecdote in his *Everyday Life in Hudson's Bay*, which will serve to shew how a feat of this kind could now and then, however, be accomplished:—

'Although the individuals of the two companies,' he says, 'were almost always at enmity at the forts, strange to say they often acted in the most friendly manner to each other, and—except when furs were in question—more agreeable or friendly neighbours seldom came together than the Hudson's Bay and North-west Companies when they planted their forts—which they often did—within 200 yards of each other in the wilds of North America. The clerks and labourers of the opposing establishments constantly visited each other; and during the Christmas and New-year's holidays, parties and balls were given without number. Dances, however, were not confined entirely to the holidays; but whenever one was given at an unusual time, it was generally for the purpose of drawing the attention of the entertained party from some movement of their entertainers. Thus, upon one occasion, the Hudson's Bay Company's look-out reported that he had discovered the tracks of Indians in the snow, and that he thought they had just returned from a hunting expedition. No sooner was this heard, than a grand ball was given to the North-west

Company. Great preparations were made; the men, dressed in their newest capotes and gaudiest hat-cords and feathers, visited each other, and nothing was thought or heard of but the ball. The evening came, and with it the guests; and soon might be heard within the fort sounds of merriment and revelry as they danced in lively measures to a Scottish reel, played by some native fiddler upon a violin of his own construction. Without the gates, however, a very different scene met the eye. Down in a hollow, where the lofty trees and dense underwood threw a shadow on the ground, a knot of men might be seen muffled in their leathern coats and fur-caps, hurrying to and fro with bundles on their backs and snow-shoes under their arms, packing and tying them firmly on trains of dog-sledges which stood, with the dogs ready harnessed, in the shadow of the bushes. The men whispered eagerly and hurriedly to each other, as they packed their goods, while others held the dogs, and patted them to keep them quiet—evidently shewing that, whatever was their object, expedition and secrecy were necessary. Soon all was in readiness; the bells, which usually tinkled on the dogs' necks, were unhooked and packed in the sledges; an active-looking man sprang forward, and set off at a round trot over the snow; and a single crack of the whip sent four sledges, each with a train of four or five dogs, after him; while two other men brought up the rear. For a time the muffled sound of the sledges was heard as they slid over the snow, while now and then the whine of a dog broke upon the ear as the impatient drivers urged them along. Gradually these sounds died away, and nothing was heard but the faint echoes of music and mirth, which floated on the frosty night-wind, giving token that the revellers still kept up the dance, and were ignorant of the departure of the trains. Late on the following day, the Nor'-west scouts reported the party of Indians, and soon a set of sleighs departed from the fort with loud ringing bells. After a long day's march of forty miles, they reached the encampment, where they found all the Indians dead drunk, and not a skin, not even the remnant of a musquash, left to repay them for their trouble! Then it was that they discovered the *ruse* of the ball, and vowed to have their revenge. Opportunity was not long wanting. Soon after this occurrence, one of the parties met a Hudson's Bay train on its way to trade with the Indians, of whom they also were in search. They exchanged compliments with each other, and as the day was very cold, proposed lighting a fire and taking a dram together. Soon five or six goodly trees yielded to their vigorous blows, and fell crashing to the ground; and in a few minutes one of the party, lighting a sulphur match with his flint and steel, set fire to a huge pile of logs, which crackled and burned furiously, sending up clouds of sparks into the wintry sky, and casting a warm tinge upon the snow and the surrounding trees. The canteen was quickly produced, and they told their stories and adventures, while the liquor mounted to

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

their brains. The Nor'-westers, however, unperceived by the others, after a little time spilled their grog on the snow, so that they kept tolerably sober, while their rivals became very much elevated; and at last they began boasting of their superior powers of drinking, and as a proof, each of them swallowed a large bumper. The Hudson's Bay party, who were nearly dead drunk by this time, of course followed their example, and almost instantly fell in a heavy sleep on the snow. In ten minutes more, they were tied firmly upon their sledges, and the dogs being turned homewards, away they went straight for the Hudson's Bay fort, where they soon arrived, the men still sound asleep, while the Nor'-westers started for the Indian camp, and this time at least had the furs all to themselves.'

### UNION OF THE NORTH-WEST AND HUDSON'S BAY COMPANIES.

Amid such scenes, relieved not unfrequently by contentions of a sterner kind—bloody brawls and conflicts between parties of armed men, involving often the loss of life and considerable destruction of property—a severe and uninterrupted competition was carried on by the two companies for nearly thirty years. At length, in the year 1821, when the violence of the contest had nearly exhausted the means of both parties, an arrangement was entered into between them, by which their interests became united, under the management of a board of directors chosen from both companies. The new association, which retained the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, possessed sufficient influence with the government of the day to obtain a licence of exclusive trade over the territories situated west of the Rocky Mountains—the country on the east side being considered sufficiently protected by the establishments of the two companies already formed there—and such vague rights as might be claimed under the charter of King Charles II. The licence of exclusive trade was granted for a period of twenty-one years, and on its expiration in 1842, it was renewed until the year 1859.

By the deed-poll of 1821, regulating the organisation of the new association, there were twenty-five chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders appointed—corresponding to the junior and senior wintering partners of the North-west Company—who were named in alternate succession from the servants of both companies. The profits, which have averaged since 1821 about L.200,000 per annum, on a nominal capital of L.400,000—a tenth part only being probably paid up—were divided into 100 shares, of which 60 were divided among the proprietors in England and Canada. The remaining 40 were subdivided into 85 shares, and each of the twenty-five chief factors was entitled to 2 shares, or 2-85ths; and each of the twenty-eight chief traders to 1-85th—the remaining

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

seven of the 85 shares being appropriated to retiring partners, in certain proportions, for seven years. With a few unimportant modifications, the arrangement entered into in 1821 subsists to the present day, when all traces of rival interests may be said to have long since disappeared, and become merged in one united and powerful organisation.

The territory embraced within the present operations of the Company may be roughly estimated at somewhat more than 4,000,000 of square miles, or about one-third greater than the whole extent of Europe. This vast area, which is covered by a net-work of about 100 trading-posts, scattered at distances of about 300 or 400 miles apart, is divided into four large departments: 1st, The Montreal Department, which includes all the establishments situated between the river St Lawrence and the great lakes of Canada, and along the north shore of the Gulf of St Lawrence and the coast of Labrador; 2d, The Southern Department, which includes the country along the north shores of Lake Superior and the southern shores of Hudson's Bay; 3d, The Northern Department, which comprehends all the establishments north of this, as far as the shores of the Polar Sea; and 4th, The Columbia Department, including the territory watered by the Columbia and other rivers west of the Rocky Mountains. The departments are divided into a number of 'districts,' each under the direction of a superior officer; and these, again, are subdivided into numerous factories, forts, posts, and outposts.

The Company is governed by a governor and committee, resident in London, elected by the stockholders, who meet once a year for the transaction of general business, and to discuss and receive reports, &c. The committee appoint a resident superintendent, who assumes the style of 'governor,' to preside at councils of chief factors and chief traders, by whom the business in America is conducted, and the instructions of the home committee carried into effect. The lower ranks of the Company's service consist of seven grades, whose duties are thus defined by Mr Ballantyne—'First, the labourer, who is ready to turn his hand to anything: to become a trapper, fisherman, or rough carpenter, at the shortest notice. He is generally employed in cutting firewood for the consumption of the establishment at which he is stationed, shovelling snow from before the doors, mending all sorts of damages to all sorts of things; and, during the summer months, in transporting furs and goods between his post and the nearest *dépôt*. Next in rank is the interpreter: he is, for the most part, an intelligent labourer, of pretty long standing in the service, who, having picked up a smattering of Indian, is consequently very useful in trading with the natives. After the interpreter comes the postmaster, usually a promoted labourer, who, for good behaviour or valuable services, has been put on a footing with the gentlemen of the service, in the same manner that a private soldier in the army is sometimes raised to the rank of a

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

commissioned-officer. At whatever station a postmaster may happen to be placed, he is generally the most useful and active man there. He is often placed in charge of one of the many small stations or outposts throughout the country. Next are the apprentice-clerks—raw lads who come out fresh from school, with their mouths agape at the wonders they behold in Hudson's Bay. They generally, for the purpose of appearing manly, acquire all the bad habits of the country as quickly as possible, and are stuffed full of what they call fun, with a strong spice of mischief. They become more sensible and sedate before they get through the first five years of their apprenticeship, after which they attain the rank of clerks. The clerk, after a number of years' service, becomes a chief trader (or half-shareholder), and in a few years more he attains the highest rank to which any one can rise in the service—that of chief factor.'

The number of employes in the Company's service is somewhat more than 1000, who are scattered in dozens and half-dozens throughout the various trading-posts over the country. They consist, for the most part, of Orkneymen, Scotch Highlanders, Norwegians, and a few French Canadians—the only class of persons to whom the hard fare and wretched pay of the Company—averaging a little more than L.1 per month—hold out sufficient temptation to enter the service. The salaries of the clerks vary from L.20 to L.100 per annum. In the time of the North-west Company, when promotion to a partnership was within the reach of almost every well-conducted young man in the service, the clerks were generally persons of good family and education. Under the present system, where, in the absence of competition, the chief stimulus to individual exertion and the opportunity for distinction it afforded has been withdrawn, and where the promotions have become in consequence monopolised among the connections of a few influential families, few persons of this class are found disposed to enter the service, or to remain long in it when they have done so. The trade carried on by the Company is almost entirely in furs, though small quantities of oil, dried and salted fish, feathers, quills, &c., are also sent to England. Viewed in any other light than as a profitable investment for a few shareholders in London, the trade to the vast continent under the sway of the Company is extremely insignificant. It employs, altogether, but three ships annually—two to Hudson's Bay, and one to the north-west coast.

Sales are made, by public auction, of furs and other returns from the country, twice or thrice in each year, at the Company's premises in London, at which one of the directors usually attends, to buy in such lots as do not reach a certain value. Printed lists of the articles to be exposed for sale are open to public inspection at the auction-room some days before. The following lists of the spring and autumn sales, in March and August 1848, may be taken as a fair average of the amount of these sales, and of the

various kinds of furs usually exposed at them:—In March, there were sold by auction at the Hudson's Bay House, in Fenchurch Street—5780 otter-skins; 458 fisher; 900 silver fox; 18,100 ditto, cross, red, white, and kitt; 2566 bear, black; 536 ditto, brown, gray, and white; 30,100 lynx; 9800 wolf; 680 wolven; 121,000 marten; 24,000 mink-skins; and sundry smaller lots. And in August—21,349 beaver-skins; 54 pounds of coat-beaver and pieces; 808 otter-skins; 195 sea-otter; 150 fur seal; 744 fisher; 1344 fox; 2997 bear; 29,785 marten; 14,103 mink; 18,553 musquash; 1551 swan; 1015 lynx; 632 cat; 1494 wolf; 228 wolven; 2090 racoon; and 2884 deer skins, &c. This forms but a small part of the yearly returns from the Company's territories, considerable quantities being exported to the continent, the United States, and occasionally to China.

From the profound secrecy in which all the proceedings of the Company are enveloped, it is difficult to arrive at any accurate details regarding the entire extent of their trade, and the profits derived from it. The gross returns from the sales of furs and other articles in London, are estimated by competent authorities, as has been previously stated, at somewhat more than L.200,000 per annum. The amount of manufactured goods exported from this country for the traffic with the natives is not known, and there are, therefore, no reliable data for estimating the profits accruing to the shareholders after all expenses have been deducted. Unlike every other description of stock, also, Hudson's Bay shares are never found in the market—the directors having, as is understood, the right of pre-emption. The profits realised upon the trade with the Indians are better known. The recent crown grant of Vancouver's Island to the Hudson's Bay Company—an episode in the colonial policy of Earl Grey, which will probably be familiar to most readers from the strong opposition it called forth at the time from parliament and the press—brought to light, among other results, some interesting details of the internal administration of the Hudson's Bay territories, upon which the public had previously little or no information. In an account of the fur-trade, we are no further concerned with these details—which the curious in such matters will find fully set forth in the Parliamentary Reports on the subject—than as they throw light upon the relations of the Company with the native Indians, the great army of hunters and trappers scattered over the wilds of North America, to whom this extensive and important commerce, in reality, owes its existence.

It is difficult to form an estimate, approaching to accuracy, of the population of the Hudson's Bay territories. From forty to fifty different tribes, speaking distinct languages, have been enumerated; but the discordant estimates even of the oldest and most experienced residents in the Indian country, forbid all idea of arriving at any accurate estimate of their numbers. Compared with the extent of territory, there can be no doubt that the

numerical amount of the population is extremely small, being scattered, as savage communities usually are, over immense tracts of wilderness, which they roam over like the wild animals on which they subsist, rather than occupy, in any received sense of the term among ourselves. These tribes are very unequally distributed, and differ considerably in manners, customs, and modes of life, as might be expected from the varying character of the climate, and the physical aspect of the country they inhabit, and the various wants and habitudes to which this difference gives rise. A general view of the Hudson's Bay territories presents for notice four great natural regions, whose inhabitants, though differing in language, and often entertaining for each other a bitter and implacable hatred, present sufficient points of similarity in their habits and modes of life to be grouped together. These are:—

1. The Columbia or Oregon Territory—a country of varied features, extending from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, and bounded severally on the north and south by the possessions of Russia and the United States.

2. The Wooded Region, occupying the country from Canada northwards along the southern shores of Hudson's Bay, and extending along the Valley of the Mackenzie and Peace Rivers nearly to the Arctic Ocean.

3. The Prairie Region, situated between the forementioned divisions, and occupying the Valley of the Saskatchewan and Red Rivers, and the upper waters of the Missouri and Mississippi.

4. The strip of sterile country along the northern shores of Hudson's Bay and the coast of the Polar Sea, familiarly known as the Barren Grounds.

Of these divisions, the Wooded Region is the most extensive and the most valuable for the purposes of the fur-trade—all the finer skins which find their way to the London market being obtained from it. It has, in consequence, been long occupied and thoroughly worked by the trading-posts and agencies of the Company. The Indians inhabiting it are, in general, at the present day, a mild inoffensive race. Long familiarity with the whites, and the habits of trade, have produced a friendly feeling among them towards Europeans, and a desire for the commodities with which they supply them, and this renders them by far the most valuable and industrious class of the population of the Hudson's Bay territories. The relation of the Company towards them is an extremely simple one—the Indians hunt and trap for the furs, which the Company receive, giving in exchange such articles as are suited to the simple wants and tastes of the natives. Trade is carried on by means of a standard valuation, based on the market-price of a beaver-skin, and hence denominated a *made-beaver*. This is to obviate the necessity of circulating money, which is quite unknown in any part of the Indian country. A beaver-skin is considered, in the Indian trade, equivalent to two, three, or more skins of inferior value. Thus an Indian arriving at



one of the Company's establishments with a bundle of furs which he intends to trade, proceeds in the first instance to the trading-room. There the trader separates the furs into lots, and after adding up the amount, delivers to the Indian a number of little pieces of wood, indicating the number of made-beaver to which his hunt amounts. He is next taken to the store-room, where he finds himself surrounded by bales of blankets, slop-coats, guns, knives, powder-horns, flints, axes, &c. Each article has a recognised value in made-beaver. A slop-coat, for example, is twelve made-beavers, for which the Indian delivers up twelve of his pieces of wood; for a gun he gives twenty; for a knife, two; and so on, until his stock of wooden cash is expended.

It will hardly be necessary to say, that the remuneration afforded to the poor Indian for his furs is, through the complete monopoly enjoyed by the Company, out of all proportion to the market value of the skins in England. This will be shewn from the table of tariff in next page, regulating the value in the Indian trade of some of the more valuable furs, and affording a comparison between the buying and selling prices of the articles in which the Company deals, to which perhaps the records of no other association in the world afford a parallel. It has been extracted from the parliamentary papers above referred to, and is introduced with the statement, that 33½ per cent. on the prime cost of the goods is considered by the Company to cover the expenses of freight, carriage, &c., to the country. The selling-prices of the different skins in London are extracted from a table given by the late Mr Hugh Murray, in his work on British North America, in the *Edinburgh Cabinet Library*, based on a list stated to have been furnished by the Company, as a fair indication of the average prices of furs in the market.

It would probably be unjust to infer from the following tariff, that the system of trade carried on by the Company, as there indicated, is equally unfavourable to the unfortunate Indian in other parts of their territories. It is certain that, at the establishments along the United States' frontier and the outskirts of Canada, it is often necessary, in order to crush or prevent competition, to give even more than the full value of the skins. Other expenses necessarily incurred in the prosecution of the trade—such as the wages of officers and servants, and the freight of shipping—must also be taken into account, as adding to the ridiculously small outlay of the Company. Still, enough remains of what is 'wrung from the hard hands of Indians' to pay dividends in London upon Hudson's Bay Stock, after all the efforts which have been made, as previously described, to give it a fictitious value, to render it one of the best investments in England. It is difficult to say how far the griping system by which these excessive gains are produced has been productive of the general misery among the natives subject to it, which the recent inquiries into the condition of the Hudson's Bay territories have brought to light. The *wants* of Indians, in a region where buffalo or deer are to be

# INDIAN TARIFF OF THE TERRITORY EMBRACED WITHIN THE ROYAL LICENCE, SITUATED EAST OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Prime Cost.	Articles supplied to the Indians.	Beaver-Skins.		Marten-Skins.		Silver Fox-Skins.		Lynx-Skins.		Otter-Skins.	
		No.	£ s. d.	No.	£ s. d.	No.	£ s. d.	No.	£ s. d.	No.	£ s. d.
23 0	1 Gun, .	20	32 10 0	60	46 10 0	5	50 0 0	20	20 0 0	20	23 10 0
0 14	1 Gill of Powder, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 14	18 Leaden Bullets, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 0	8 Charges of Shot, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 0	10 Gun Flint, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
1 6	1 Axe, .	3	4 17 6	9	6 19 6		7 10 0	3	3 0 0	3	3 10 6
12 0	1 Copper Kettle (6 gallons), .	16	26 0 0	48	37 4 0		40 0 0	16	16 0 0	16	18 16 0
0 2	1 Fire-steel, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 0		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 4	1 Scalping-knife, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 0		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 6	1 File (8-inch), .	2	3 5 0	6	4 13 0		5 0 0	2	2 0 0	2	2 7 0
0 9	1 Tobacco-box and Burning-glass, .	2	3 5 0	6	4 13 0		5 0 0	2	2 0 0	2	2 7 0
0 2	1 Common Horn Comb, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 24	8 Awls, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 34	1 Dozen Brass Buttons, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 3	12 Brass Finger-rings, .	2	3 5 0	6	4 13 0		5 0 0	2	2 0 0	2	2 7 0
0 1	6 Clay Tobacco-pipes, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 4	1 Paper-mounted Mirror, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 10	1 Pound of Heads, .	6	9 15 0	18	13 19 0		15 0 0	6	6 0 0	6	7 1 0
0 34	6 Ounce of Tobacco, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
5 94	1 Blanket (3-point) plain, .	10	16 5 0	30	23 5 0		25 0 0	10	10 0 0	10	11 15 0
7 0	" " striped, .	12	19 10 0	36	27 18 0		30 0 0	12	12 0 0	12	14 2 0
12 0	Man's Slop-coat (large), .	12	19 10 0	36	27 18 0		30 0 0	12	12 0 0	12	14 2 0
5 3	Boy's " (largest), .	5	8 2 6	15	11 12 6		12 10 0	5	5 0 0	5	5 17 6
0 24	6 Yards Gartering, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
6 6	1 Pair of Trousers, .	9	14 12 6	27	20 18 6		22 10 0	9	9 0 0	9	10 11 6
1 9	1 Shirt (Cotton), .	3	4 17 6	9	6 19 6		7 10 0	3	3 0 0	3	3 10 6
0 44	1 Handkerchief (Cotton), .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 3	1 Ounce of Vermilion, .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6
0 4	1 Pint of Rum (watered), .	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6		2 10 0	1	1 0 0	1	1 3 6

found, as is the case in the prairie region and parts of the Oregon territory, are limited to ammunition and a few articles of iron and tin; and their *desires*, to the possession of a few trinkets. There are extensive tracts, however, in which the means of subsistence are scanty in the extreme; and in the greater part of the territories now under review—namely, the wooded districts, where, under a constant persecution for more than a century, the larger animals which supply the food of man have nearly become extinct (the preservation of the fur-bearing animals is provided for by strict regulations laid down by the Company) the wretched natives, during winter, can with difficulty collect enough food to support life. In this part of the country, fish is at all times scarce and difficult to be obtained in the winter season; and during that period, nearly the sole dependence of the natives for subsistence is placed upon rabbits. When these fail, the most frightful tragedies at times take place. The too frequent resort in such cases is to cannibalism. 'Parents have been known to lengthen out a miserable existence by killing and devouring their own children.' The climate and soil of these tracts are in many parts adapted for cultivation; but from the short-sighted and selfish policy of the traders, no attempts have been anywhere made to develop the agricultural capabilities of the country. Their dread is, that, by abandoning their wandering habits, and setting themselves down to agricultural pursuits, even for a small portion of the year, the Indians might become less valuable as hunters. The fatal results of this policy are every year becoming apparent in the depopulation of the country, from which the native tribes are rapidly disappearing. Giving every credit to the Company for the energy and enterprise of their operations, it cannot be denied that the results of the system under which the Hudson's Bay territories are at present placed, are, as regards the development of the resources of the country, and the progress and enlightenment of the native races, disastrous in the extreme. No doubt, many of the Company's servants are generous and humane, as well as enterprising and intelligent; but, on the other hand, it is equally undeniable that the profits—the very existence of the Company, as at present constituted—depend on keeping the whole territory under their rule a vast hunting-ground, an enormous preserve—upon keeping whole nations of Indians as hunters and trappers, and discouraging anything like civilisation and agricultural settlement; above all, upon keeping the territory shut up, preventing its ever becoming a highway, sticking up a great 'No thoroughfare board' at every entrance, and thus avoiding the risk of any competition in the fur-traffic. Amidst the vast and various sources of our national wealth, and the manifold directions in which it is employed, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the comparatively insignificant commercial operations of the Company should have escaped much public notice. Nor is it more surprising that, invested with such powers, and in the possession

## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

of such admirable machinery for veiling in impenetrable secrecy their transactions, as well as the country in which they are carried on, they should have been able for so long a period to prolong their existence. The address, now pending, of the House of Commons to the Crown, for an inquiry into the legality of the powers exercised by the Company under their charter, will probably do much towards placing the administration of the Hudson's Bay territories on a better footing; and it is to be hoped that, among the subjects that will come under the consideration of parliament, the amelioration of the condition of the aborigines will not be overlooked. Apart from all considerations of humanity, it is seldom that the aborigines of any country have had so strong a claim upon our sympathy and protection. The trade created and sustained by their industry has already enriched this country by more than L.20,000,000 sterling; and yet, to this day, throughout the vast territories of Hudson's Bay, there is neither a church nor a school established by the Company where the Indian can receive the commonest rudiments of Christianity or education: he is still roaming about his forests and his lakes, shivering naked that we may be warmly clad, dying by starvation that the cup of our luxury may be filled!

Happily, there are still extensive tracts which the evils of over-hunting and overtrading have not yet reached, and where the Indian may still be found enjoying much of that savage independence, and displaying many of those traits of mind and character, with which fiction and romance have invested him. While the wretched and half-starved hunter of the north drags on a toilsome and cheerless existence, amidst his mazy wilderness of forests and wintry lakes, hanging in helpless dependence upon the white strangers who are making a market of his ignorance and necessities—the powerful and warlike Blackfeet, the Sioux, the Assiniboine, and other formidable tribes, are scouring the boundless prairies of the south and west, and revelling in the abundant produce of countless herds of buffalo and deer. Whatever of romantic interest attaches at the present day to the fur-trade of America, must be sought for here, or in the somewhat similar region on the west of the Rocky Mountains, which we have denominated the Columbia or Oregon Territory.

The Prairie Region, and the districts just alluded to on the west side of the mountains, have been for many years, or at least until the recent settlement of the long agitated 'Oregon Question,' between this country and the United States, a sort of debatable land or border territory between the British and American fur-traders; and this, added to the warlike and predatory character of many of the tribes inhabiting it, has caused a new species of traffic, and a new order of trappers and traders to spring out of the hunting and trapping competition carried on within it. The fur-trade of the United States is, for the most part, in the hands of two great trading associations—the Rocky Mountain Fur Company,

and the American Fur Company; the latter, founded by the celebrated Mr Astor, the originator of the ill-fated enterprise to which Washington Irving has given an enduring celebrity in his popular publication of *Astoria*. The American Fur Companies keep few or no established posts beyond the mountains; everything there is regulated by resident partners—that is to say, partners who reside in the tramontane country, but who move about from place to place, either with Indian tribes, whose traffic they wish to monopolise, or with bodies of their own men, whom they employ in trading and trapping. In the meantime, they detach bands or brigades, as they are termed, of trappers, in various directions, assigning to each a portion of country as a hunting or trapping ground. In the months of June or July, when there is an interval between the hunting-seasons, a general rendezvous is held at some designated place in the mountains, when the affairs of the past year are settled by the resident partners, and the plans for the following year arranged. To this rendezvous repair the various brigades of trappers from their widely separated hunting-grounds, bringing in the products of their year's campaign. Hither also repair the Indian tribes accustomed to traffic their peltries with the Company. Bands of free-trappers—the prototypes of Cooper's popular character of Hawkeye—resort thither also, to sell the furs they have collected, or to engage their services for the next hunting-season.

The employment of these free-trappers, in which the Hudson's Bay Company, along the frontiers, follow the example of their American rivals, has imparted a new character to the trade of this part of the country, and frequently converted the native tribes, some of them incorrigibly savage and warlike in their nature, from peaceful hunters into formidable foes. Some of these tribes, resenting the incursions of the trappers into their hunting-grounds, have long carried on a ruthless crusade against the white invaders of their soil, regarding the expeditions of the fur-traders only as grand objects of plunder and profitable adventure. To waylay and harass a band of trappers with their packhorses, when embarrassed in the rugged defiles of the mountains, has become as favourite and legitimate an exploit with these Indians, as the plunder of a caravan to the Arab of the desert. The Crows and Blackfeet are particularly the terror of the American fur-traders. They know the routes and resorts of the trappers—where to waylay them on their journeys, where to find them in the hunting-seasons, and where to hover about them in winter-quarters. The life of a trapper is thus a perpetual state-militant, and he must sleep with his weapons in his hand.

Many and marvellous are the stories related by American travellers of the hair-breadth 'scapes, and perils by flood and field of the trappers' life in the Far West. Of this kind is a story related by Farnham, in his *Travels in the Rocky Mountains*, of a trapper who had separated from his companion, and, travelling

far up the Missouri, by chance discovered a most beautiful valley. Here he thought he could remain till his death. "The lower mountains were covered with tall pines, and above and around, except in the east, where the morning sun sent his rays, the bright glittering ridges rose high against the sky, decked in the garniture of perpetual frosts. Along the valley lay a clear pure lake, in the centre of which played a number of fountains, that threw their waters many feet above its surface, and sending their waves rippling away to the pebbly shores, made the mountains and groves that were reflected from its bosom, seem to leap and clap their hands for joy at the sacred quiet that reigned amongst them. He pitched his tent on the shore, in a little copse of hemlock, and set his traps. Having done this, he explored carefully the valley for egress, ingress, signs, &c. His object was to ascertain if the valley were tenanted by human beings, and if there were places of escape should it be entered by hostile persons through the pass that led himself to it. He found no other except one for the waters of the lake, through a deep chasm in the mountains, and this was such, that no one could descend it alive to the lower valleys; for, as he waded and swam by turns down its waters, he soon found himself drawn by an increasing current, which sufficiently indicated to him the cause of the deep roar that resounded from the caverns below. He, accordingly, made the shore, and climbed along among the projecting crags, till he overlooked an abyss of fallen rocks, into which the stream poured and foamed and was lost in the mist. He returned to his camp, satisfied he had found a hitherto undiscovered valley, stored with beaver and trout, and grass for his horses; where he could trap fish, and dream awhile in safety. And every morning, for three delightful weeks, did he draw the beaver from the deep pools, where they had plunged when the quick trap had seized them; and stringing them two and two together over his packhorse bore them to his camp, and with his long side-knife stripped off the skins for fur, pinned them to the ground to dry, and in his camp-kettle cooked the much-prized tails for his mid-day repast. "Was it not a fine hunt that?" asked he; "beaver as thick as mosquitoes, trout as plenty as water; but the ungodly Blackfeet!" The sun had thrown a few rays upon the rim of the eastern firmament, whence the Blackfeet war-whoop rang around his tent—a direful "whoopah-hoah," ending with a yell, piercing, sharp, and shrill through the clenched teeth. He had but one means of escape—the lake. Into it he plunged beneath a shower of poisoned arrows—plunged deeply, and swam under while he could endure the absence of air. He rose; he was in the midst of his foes, swimming and shouting round him; down again, and up to breathe, and on he swam with long and powerful sweeps. The pursuit was long; but at last he entered the chasm which he had explored, plunged along the cascade as near as he dared, clung to a shrub that grew from the crevice of the rock, and lay under water for the approach of his pursuers. On they came: they

passed, they shrieked, and plunged for ever into the abyss of mist!

Notwithstanding the life of continued exertion, peril, and excitement which they lead, there is no class of men, according to Captain Bonneville, who are more enamoured of their occupation than the free-trappers of the West. No toil, no danger, no privation, can turn the trapper from his pursuit: his passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. In vain may the most vigilant and cruel savages beset his path; in vain may rocks and precipices and wintry torrents oppose his progress; let but a single track of a beaver meet his eye, and he forgets all dangers and defies all difficulties. At times he may be seen with his traps on his shoulder, buffeting his way across rapid streams, amidst floating blocks of ice; at other times, he is to be found with his traps swung on his back, clambering over the most rugged mountains, scaling or descending the most frightful precipices, searching by routes inaccessible to the horse, and never before trodden by white man, for springs and lakes unknown to his comrades, and where he may meet with his favourite game. Such is the hardy trapper of the American fur-trade, and such is the wild Robin-Hood kind of life, with all its strange and motley populace, now existing in full vigour on the mountains and in the vast prairies stretching along the border territories of the Far West.

The Hudson's Bay Company are not partial to the employment of this class, whose notions of trade and fair profits are but little suited to the latitude of Hudson's Bay, and employ them at all only when the encroachments of the American Fur Companies along the frontiers render it necessary to oppose them with their own weapons. The establishments of the Company on the prairie region, and the frontier parts of the Oregon Territory, are kept up at little or no profit, and frequently at a considerable loss, from the high prices it is necessary to pay for the furs, to prevent or crush competition. The establishments are useful, however, as depôts for collecting provisions—being situated in the heart of the buffalo country—for the use of the famished but profitable districts in the north, whence, as already stated, the principal portion of the furs is derived. The produce of the prairie districts consists chiefly of the coarser kinds of furs—such as the wolf, fox, and lynx, and the buffalo-robos, which are obtained in immense quantities, and fetch a high price in the markets of Canada and the United States, where they are much prized for wrappers for winter-travelling and sledge-driving.

The district referred to in the geographical sketch as the Barren Grounds, is almost valueless for the purposes of the fur-trade. The only inhabitants are the Esquimaux, who live chiefly by fishing along the coast, and trade in oil, feathers, seal-skins, and ivory at the few posts which have hitherto been established in that part of the country.

It has been remarked, that the policy of the Hudson's Bay

Company is averse to colonisation. One small settlement, however, has contrived to force itself into existence on the banks of the Red River—a small stream rising near the head-waters of the Mississippi, and falling into Lake Winnipeg, in latitude 50 degrees north. Red River was first settled upon by the traders of the North-west Company, but it did not assume the character of a colony till 1811, when the late Earl Selkirk, then a leading proprietor in the Hudson's Bay Company, obtained a grant of the territory, ostensibly for the purpose of forming a British settlement on it, but in reality with the view of dispossessing the North-west Company of a valuable district, from which a large portion of their supplies for carrying on their trade in the interior was obtained. On the junction of the two companies, such of their retiring servants with their families as were unwilling to leave the country, were allowed to settle in it. The colony was increased by the accession of a few emigrants brought out from Europe by Lord Selkirk, consisting chiefly of Scotch Highlanders and a few Norwegians; and it now numbers a population of about 10,000 souls. The representatives of Lord Selkirk recently transferred their interests in the colony to the Hudson's Bay Company, by whom it is now governed.

On the north-west coast an experiment is being made, under the auspices of the government, to establish a colony on the Pacific in Vancouver's Island. After a strong opposition in parliament, headed by the present Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, the management of the colony was intrusted to the Hudson's Bay Company for a period of five years from 1848. The advantages of its situation, and the large supply of coal found on the island, augur well for its future prosperity and importance. The progress of the settlement must necessarily, however, be very much impeded by the operation of the recent gold discoveries in California, which it is understood have already drawn away many of the emigrants who have proceeded to the island from this country.

A sketch of the fur-trade of North America calls for some notice of the operations of the Russian Fur Company, established in the extreme north-west angle of the continent. This association owes its formation to the Emperor Paul of Russia, who, in the year 1799, organised the trade of the North-west Coast of America on its present footing. The Russian Company, like the Hudson's Bay Company, is a monopoly, but more intimately connected with the government—the emperor being a shareholder, and all its officers being in the imperial service.

The territory embraced within the operations of the Company includes all the Pacific coast of America, and the islands north of latitude 54° 40', and the whole of the continent west of 141°; the Asiatic coast of the Pacific, north of 51°; and the islands of the Kurile group as far south as 45° 50'. In 1839, when the charter of the Company was last renewed, there were altogether thirty-six hunting and fishing establishments.



## FUR-TRADE AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Sitka, or New Archangel, founded in 1805, is a military station, and the chief post of the Russian Fur Company. The fort mounts sixteen short eighteen, and forty-two long nine pounders, and there are about 300 officers and men. The Company has twelve vessels, varying from 100 to 400 tons each, mounting ten guns of different calibre. There is a Greek bishop, with several priests and deacons, and also a Lutheran minister, and several schools for the children of the European and half-caste population. The whole of the territories is divided into six agencies, each controlled by the governor-general, who resides at Sitka. The trade of Sitka in 1842 was estimated at 10,000 fur seals, 1000 sea-otters, 12,000 beavers, 2500 land-otters, foxes, and martens, and 20,000 sea-horse teeth. The progress of Sitka in commerce is very considerable. A recent traveller states, that in April 1843 he found eleven vessels and two steamers in the harbour—one, a steam-tug, had its machinery cast and manufactured at Sitka. Steam pleasure-boats of two horse-power had also been built there.

The census of 1836 gave the number of Russians in the territories of the Company at 730; of native subjects and creoles, 1442; and 11,000 aborigines of the Kurile, Aleutian, and Kodiak islands. The inhabitants of these islands are regarded as the immediate subjects of the Russian Company, in whose service every man between eighteen and fifty may be required to pass at least three years. The natives of the country adjacent to Cook's Inlet and Prince William's Sound, are also under the control of the Company, and are obliged to pay an annual tax in furs and skins.





## WILLIAM COBBETT.



N the second year of George III.'s reign—when Edmund Burke was editing the *Annual Register* at a salary of L.50 a year—when Dr Johnson's friends were busily at work urging ministers to obtain a pension for him from the amiable young monarch—when Horace Walpole was entertaining his numerous correspondents with that delightful gossip about the new court and young Queen Charlotte, which, after nearly a century, still preserves its charm—when William Pitt was learning the alphabet, and Charles James Fox was making Latin verses at Eton, little dreaming of the important part which he and his young rival were destined to play in the world's history—in the spring of that year (1762), in a small cottage in the town of Farnham, in Surrey, William Cobbett, one of the most remarkable self-taught men of whom England can boast,

first saw the light. 'With respect to my ancestors,' he says in his *Adventures of Peter Porcupine*, 'I shall go no further back than my grandfather; and for this plain reason—that I never heard talk of any prior to him. He was a day-labourer; and I have heard my father say, that he worked for one farmer from the day of his marriage to that of his death—upwards of forty years. He died before I was born; but I have often slept beneath the same roof that had sheltered him, and where his widow dwelt for several years after his death. It was a little thatched cottage, with a garden before the door. It had but two windows—a damson-tree shaded one, and a clump of filberts the other. Here I and my brothers went every Christmas and Whitsuntide to spend a week or two, and torment the poor old woman with our noise and dilapidations. She used to give us milk and bread for breakfast, an apple-pudding for our dinner, and a piece of bread and cheese for supper. Her fire was made of turf, cut from the neighbouring heath, and her evening light was a rush dipped in grease.

'My father, when I was born, was a farmer. The reader will easily believe, from the poverty of his parents, that he had received no very brilliant education; he was, however, learned for a man in his rank of life. When a little boy, he drove the plough for twopence a day; and these, his earnings, were appropriated to the expenses of an evening-school. What a village schoolmaster could be expected to teach, he had learned; and had, besides, considerably improved himself in several branches of the mathematics. He understood land-surveying well, and was often chosen to draw the plans of disputed territory; in short, he had the reputation of possessing experience and understanding, which never fails in England to give a man in a country place some little weight with his neighbours. He was honest, industrious, and frugal; it was not, therefore, wonderful that he should be situated in a good farm, and happy in a wife of his own rank, like him beloved and respected.

'A father like ours, it will be readily supposed, did not suffer us to eat the bread of idleness. I do not remember the time when I did not earn my living. My first occupation was driving the small birds from the turnip-seed, and the rooks from the pease. When I first trudged a field, with my wooden bottle and my satchel swung over my shoulders, I was hardly able to climb the gates and stiles; and at the close of the day, to reach home was a task of infinite difficulty. My next employment was weeding wheat, and leading a single horse at harrowing barley. Hoeing pease followed; and hence I arrived at the honour of joining the reapers in harvest, driving the team, and holding the plough. We were all of us strong and laborious; and my father used to boast that he had four boys, the eldest of whom was but fifteen years old, who did as much work as any three men in the parish of Farnham. Honest pride, and happy days! I have some faint

recollection of going to school to an old woman, who, I believe, did not succeed in learning me my letters. In the winter evenings, my father learned us all to read and write, and gave us a pretty tolerable knowledge of arithmetic. Grammar he did not perfectly understand himself, and therefore his endeavours to learn us that necessarily failed; for though he thought he understood it, and though he made us get the rules by heart, we learned nothing at all of the principles.

‘Our religion was that of the Church of England, to which I have ever remained attached; the more so, perhaps, as it bears the name of my country. As to politics, we were like the rest of the country-people in England; that is to say, we neither knew nor thought anything about the matter. The shouts of victory, or the murmurs at a defeat, would now and then break in upon our tranquillity for a moment; but I do not remember ever having seen a newspaper in the house; and, most certainly, that privation did not render us less industrious, happy, or free. After, however, the American war had continued for some time, and the cause and nature of it began to be understood, or rather misunderstood, by the lower classes of the people in England, we became a little better acquainted with subjects of this kind. It is well known that the people were, as to numbers, nearly equally divided in their opinions concerning that war, and their wishes respecting the result of it. My father was a partisan of the Americans; he used frequently to dispute on the subject with the gardener of a nobleman who lived near us. This was generally done with good-humour over a pot of our best ale; yet the disputants sometimes grew warm, and gave way to language that could not fail to attract our attention. My father was worsted, without doubt, as he had for an antagonist a shrewd and sensible old Scotchman, far his superior in political knowledge; but he pleaded before a partial audience: we thought there was but one wise man in the world, and that that one was our father.’

As he was in no humour, while writing his *Life of Peter Porcupine*, to indulge in much detail regarding the incidents of his boyhood, he skips over the whole of that period in a single sentence. ‘It would be as useless as unentertaining,’ he says, ‘to dwell on the occupations and sports of a country-boy; to lead the reader to fairs, cricket-matches, and hare-hunts.’ Under this impression, therefore, he takes a jump forward to 1782, when he must have been twenty years old. Of his early tastes and habits, however—his love of gardening and of a country life, for example, which he always hankered after—we have many delightful reminiscences in almost every one of his books, and not unfrequently even in the midst of some of his most furious articles in the *Political Register*. ‘From my very infancy,’ he says, in the preface to *A Year’s Residence in America*, ‘from the age of six years, when I climbed up the side of a steep sand-rock, and there scooped me out a plot four feet square to make me a garden, and

the soil for which I carried up in the bosom of my little blue smock-frock or hunting-shirt, I have never lost one particle of my passion for these healthy and rational and heart-cheering pursuits, in which every day presents something new, in which the spirits are never suffered to flag, and in which industry, skill, and care, are sure to meet with their due reward. I have never, for any eight months together, during my whole life, been without a garden.' This love of gardening, which shews itself in many a part of his writings, especially in the *Rural Rides*, he traces to the home education he had received. He was brought up under a father whose talk was chiefly about his garden and his fields, with regard to which he was famed for his skill and neatness. The character of the district in which he was born and bred must have had also no small influence in strengthening his horticultural tendencies. He never tires of sounding the praises of the hop-gardens of Farnham. The neatest in England, if not in the whole world. 'All there is a garden. The neat culture of the hop extends its influence to the fields round about. Hedges cut with shears, and every other mark of skill and care strike the eye at Farnham, and become fainter and fainter as you go from it in every direction.' His first start from home, at the early age of eleven, as he describes, in the following passage, which occurs in an *Address to the Reformers*, published in 1820, was inspired by a determination to see Kew Gardens, of which he had heard such a description as left him no rest till he had gone and seen that collection of horticultural marvels.

'At eleven years of age, my employment was clipping of box-edgings and weeding beds of flowers in the garden of the Bishop of Winchester, at the castle of Farnham. I had always been fond of beautiful gardens; and a gardener, who had just come from the king's gardens at Kew, gave such a description of them as made me instantly resolve to work in these gardens. The next morning, without saying a word to any one, off I set, with no clothes except those upon my back, and with thirteen half-pence in my pocket. I found that I must go to Richmond, and I accordingly went from place to place inquiring my way thither. A long day—it was in June—brought me to Richmond in the afternoon. Two pennyworth of bread and cheese, and a pennyworth of small-beer, which I had on the road, and a half-penny which I had lost somehow or other, left threepence in my pocket. With this for my whole fortune, I was trudging through Richmond in my blue smock-frock and my red garters tied under my knees, when, staring about me, my eye fell upon a little book in a bookseller's window, on the outside of which was written: "Tale of a Tub; price 3d." The title was so odd that my curiosity was excited. I had the threepence, but then I could have no supper. In I went and got the little book, which I was so impatient to read, that I got over into a field at the upper corner of Kew Garden, where there stood a haystack; on the shady side of this I sat down to read. The book

was so different from anything that I had read before, it was something so new to my mind, that though I could not at all understand some of it, it delighted me beyond description; and it produced what I have always considered a birth of intellect. I read on till it was dark, without any thought about supper or bed. When I could see no longer, I put my little book in my pocket, and tumbled down by the side of the stack, where I slept till the birds in Kew Gardens awaked me in the morning, when off I started to Kew, reading my little book. The singularity of my dress, the simplicity of my manner, my confident and lively air, and, doubtless, his own compassion besides, induced the gardener, who was a Scotchman, to give me victuals, find me a lodging, and set me to work. And it was during the period that I was at Kew, that the present king (George IV.) and two of his brothers laughed at the oddness of my dress, while I was sweeping the grass-plot round the foot of the pagoda. The gardener, seeing me fond of books, lent me some gardening books to read; but these I could not relish after my *Tale of a Tub*, which I carried about with me wherever I went; and when I, at about twenty years old, lost it in a box that fell overboard in the Bay of Fundy, in North America, the loss gave me greater pain than I have ever felt at losing thousands of pounds. This circumstance, trifling as it was, and childish as it may seem to relate it, has always endeared the recollection of Kew to me.

What a pity that he did not leave us a few more such reminiscences of that period, trifling as he professed to consider them! After this delightful picture of his journey to Kew, we lose sight of him entirely for a number of years. How long he remained in the royal gardens, or how he was received when he went back to Farnham, has never been recorded. The next glimpse we have of young Cobbett is after he has arrived at manhood, in the autumn of 1782.

Having gone to visit a relation who lived in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, he first beheld the sea from the top of Portsdown, and immediately felt a strong desire to become a sailor. He could never account for this sudden impulse, except on the hypothesis that 'almost all English boys feel the same inclination: it would seem that, like young ducks, instinct leads them to rush on the bosom of the water.' But it was not the view of the ocean alone which had such an electric effect upon young Cobbett. 'The grand fleet was riding at anchor at Spithead. I had heard of the wooden walls of Old England; I had formed my ideas of a ship and of a fleet; but what I now beheld so far surpassed what I had ever been able to form a conception of, that I stood lost between astonishment and admiration. I had heard talk of the glorious deeds of our admirals and sailors, of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and of all those memorable combats that good and true Englishmen never fail to relate to their children about a hundred times a year. The brave Rodney's victories over our natural enemies, the French and

Spaniards, had been the theme of our praise and the burden of our songs.' [This was written in 1796.] 'My heart was inflated with national pride. The sailors were my countrymen, the fleet belonged to my country, and surely I had my part in it, and in all its honours; yet these honours I had not earned. I took to myself a sort of reproach for possessing what I had no right to, and resolved to have a just claim by sharing in the hardships and dangers.'

He arrived at his uncle's late in the evening, full of his sea-faring project. He had walked thirty miles that day, and consequently was somewhat tired; but, fatigued as he was, his brain was too busy with the naval panorama he had seen that afternoon to let him fall asleep. No sooner was it daylight, than he rose and walked down to the beach, got into a boat, and in a few minutes was on board the *Pegasus* man-of-war. According to Cobbett's own account, the captain, who had more compassion than is generally met with in men of his profession, tried to persuade him to go home, representing the service as a very toilsome and perilous one; but these arguments made very little impression upon him. He had resolved to become a sailor whatever the toil or danger, and accordingly he made an attempt to get his name enrolled in another vessel. There, also, the captain was unwilling to receive him, and he was forced to wend his way home to Farnham, which he did very reluctantly. He returned once more to the plough, but he was spoiled for a farmer. Previous to his Portsmouth adventure, he had known no other ambition than that of surpassing his brothers in the different labours of the field; but that was all over now. 'I sighed for a sight of the world,' he says. 'The little island of Britain seemed too small a compass for me. The things in which I had taken the most delight were neglected; the singing of the birds grew insipid; and even the heart-cheering cry of the hounds, after which I formerly used to fly from the work, bound o'er the fields, and dash through the brakes and coppices, was heard with the most torpid indifference.' Out of this unfortunate state of mind, the most common mode of escape is to run away from home once more, and this appears to have been the course adopted by Cobbett, a few months after his visit to Portsmouth.

'It was on the 6th of May 1783, that I, like Don Quixote, sallied forth to seek adventures. I was dressed in my holiday clothes, in order to accompany two or three lasses to Guildford Fair. They were to assemble at a house, about three miles from my home, where I was to attend them; but, unfortunately for me, I had to cross the London turnpike-road. The stage-coach had just turned the summit of a hill, and was rattling down towards me at a merry rate. The notion of going to London never entered my mind till this very moment, yet the step was completely determined on before the coach came to the spot where I stood. Up I got, and was in London about nine o'clock in the

evening. It was by mere accident that I had money enough to defray the expenses of this day. Being rigged out for the fair, I had three or four crown and half-crown pieces (which most certainly I did not intend to spend), besides a few shillings and halfpence. This, my little all, which I had been years in amassing, melted away like snow before the sun when touched by the fingers of the innkeepers and their waiters. In short, when I arrived at Ludgate Hill, and had paid my fare, I had but about half-a-crown in my pocket.'

Fortunately for the young adventurer, he had fallen into conversation with one of the passengers on the coach, a hop-merchant from Southwark, who had often dealt with his father at Weyhill. Taking an interest in the friendless youth, he invited him to his house, which he was told to look upon as his home till something would turn up. But before taking any steps to obtain employment for him, he wrote to Cobbett's father, letting him know where his son was, and endeavoured to persuade him to obey his father's order, that he should return home instantly. Cobbett confesses that he would willingly have done so, but for that false pride which, under similar circumstances, so frequently overcomes the sense of duty, and the natural impulse of affection. 'It was the first time I had ever been disobedient,' he says, 'and I have repented of it from that moment to this.' The gentleman who had taken him under his protection, finding that his obstinacy could not be overcome, obtained a situation for him as copying-clerk with a Mr Holland, a solicitor in Gray's Inn, where he passed nearly a year in wretched drudgery, according to his own graphic description.

'No part of my life has been totally unattended with pleasure, except the eight or nine months I passed in Gray's Inn. The office—for so the dungeon where I wrote was called—was so dark that, on cloudy days, we were obliged to burn candle. I worked like a galley-slave from five in the morning till eight or nine at night, and sometimes all night long. How many quarrels have I assisted to foment and perpetuate between those poor innocent fellows, John Doe and Richard Roe! How many times—God forgive me!—have I set them to assault each other with guns, swords, staves, and pitchforks, and then brought them to answer for their misdeeds before our sovereign lord the king, seated in his court of Westminster! When I think of the saids and soforths, and the counts of tautology that I scribbled over—when I think of those sheets of seventy-two words, and those lines two inches apart, my brain turns. Gracious Heaven! if I am doomed to be wretched, bury me beneath Iceland snows, and let me feed on blubber; stretch me under the burning line, and deny me thy propitious dew; nay, if it be thy will, suffocate me with the infected and pestilential air of a democratic club-room; but save me from the desk of an attorney!

'Mr Holland was but little in the chambers himself. He always



went out to dinner, while I was left to be provided for by the laundress, as he called her. Those gentlemen of the law who have resided in the Inns of Court in London, know very well what a laundress means. Ours was, I believe, the oldest and ugliest of the sisterhood. She had age and experience enough to be lady-abbess of all the nuns in all the convents of Irish Town. It would be wronging the Witch of Endor to compare her to this hag, who was the only creature that deigned to enter into conversation with me. All except the name, I was in prison, and this weird sister was my keeper. Our chambers were to me what the subterraneous cavern was to Gil Blas: his description of the Dame Leonarda exactly suited my laundress; nor were the professions, or rather the practice, of our master altogether dissimilar.'

It was not surprising that he should have at last made up his mind to escape from a mode of life which must have been purgatory to one who had previously been occupied in rural employment. The only wonder is, that a spirited young fellow should have endured it so long as he seems to have done. In the spring of 1784, while walking in St James's Park one Sunday, as was his custom, to feast his eyes 'with the sight of the trees, the grass, and the water,' he saw an advertisement 'inviting all loyal young men, who had a mind to gain riches and glory, to repair to a certain rendezvous, where they might enter into his majesty's marine service, and have the peculiar happiness and honour of being enrolled in the Chatham Division.' As he still retained the desire to go to sea, and as he knew that the marines spend most of their time on that element, he took the shilling; but without making due inquiry, as he found that he had enlisted in a marching regiment, the 54th, the head-quarters of which were at that time in Nova Scotia.

'As peace had then taken place, no great haste was made to send recruits off to their regiments. I remained upwards of a year at Chatham, during which time I was employed in learning my exercise, and taking my turn in the duty of the garrison. My leisure time, which was a very considerable portion of the twenty-four hours, was spent, not in the dissipations common to such a way of life, but in reading and study. In the course of this year I learned more than I had ever done before. I subscribed to a circulating library at Brompton, the greatest part of the books in which I read more than once over. The library was not very considerable, it is true, nor in my reading was I directed by any degree of taste or choice. Novels, plays, history, poetry, all were read, and nearly with equal avidity.

'Such a course of reading could be attended with but little profit: it was skimming over the surface of everything. One branch of learning, however, I went to the bottom with—and that the most essential branch too—the grammar of my mother tongue. I had experienced the want of a knowledge of grammar during my stay with Mr Holland; but it is very probable that I never

should have thought of encountering the study of it, had not accident placed me under a man whose friendship extended beyond his interest. Writing a fair hand procured me the honour of being copyist to Colonel Debeig, the commandant of the garrison. I transcribed the famous correspondence between him and the Duke of Richmond, which ended in the good and gallant old colonel being stripped of the reward bestowed on him for his long and meritorious servitude.

'Being totally ignorant of the rules of grammar, I necessarily made many mistakes in copying; because no one can copy letter by letter, nor even word by word. The colonel saw my deficiency, and strongly recommended study. He enforced his advice with a sort of injunction, and with a promise of reward in case of success. I procured me a Lowth's Grammar, and applied myself to the study of it with unceasing assiduity, and not without some profit; for though it was a considerable time before I fully comprehended all that I read, still I read and studied with such unremitting attention, that at last I could write without falling into any very gross errors. The pains I took cannot be described. I wrote the whole grammar out two or three times. I got it by heart. I repeated it every morning and every evening, and when on guard. I imposed on myself the task of saying it all over once every time I was posted sentinel. To this exercise of my memory I ascribe the retentiveness of which I have since found it capable; and to the success with which it was attended, I ascribe the perseverance that has led to the acquirement of the little learning of which I am master.'

His steadiness and regularity soon led to promotion. In a very short time he was made corporal—no great advance it may be thought; but to him, at that stage of his progress, a most notable event, seeing that it raised his small income 'a clear twopence per diem.' A few months after his enlistment, the detachment to which he belonged sailed from Gravesend for Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he joined his regiment, and from which he proceeded with it to St John's and New Brunswick shortly afterwards. By the end of his third year in the army, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant-major, over the heads of thirty sergeants; and this promotion appears to have been mainly owing to the excellent character he had acquired for early rising, and extraordinary attention to the duties of his profession. In his *Advice to Young Men*, he says, with reference to this period of his life: 'Before my promotion, a clerk was wanted to make out the morning report of the regiment. I rendered the clerk unnecessary; and long before any other man was dressed for the parade, my work for the morning was all done, and I myself was on the parade walking, in fine weather, perhaps for an hour. My custom was thus—to get up in summer in daylight, and in winter at four o'clock; shave, dress, even to the putting on my sword-belt over my shoulder, and having my sword lying on the table before me ready to hang by my side.'

Then I ate a bit of cheese, or pork and bread. Then I prepared my report, which was filled up as fast as the companies brought me in the materials. After this, I had an hour or two to read before the time came for any duty out of doors, unless when the regiment or part of it went to exercise in the morning. When this was the case, and the matter left to me, I always had it on the ground in such time that the bayonets glittered in the rising sun—a sight which gave me delight, of which I often think, but which in vain I should endeavour to describe. If the officers were to go out, eight or ten o'clock was the hour, sweating the men in the heat of the day, breaking in upon the time of cooking their dinner, putting all things out of order, and everybody out of humour. When I was the commander, the men had a long day of leisure before them: they could ramble into the town, or into the woods; go to get raspberries; to catch birds, to catch fish, or to pursue any other recreation; and such of them as chose, and were qualified, to work at their trades. So that here, arising solely from the early habits of one young man, were pleasant and happy days given to hundreds.' This topic of early rising—its manifold advantages, and the importance of acquiring the habit in early life, if a man wishes to make his way in the world—is one on which he is never tired of expatiating, especially in that most entertaining and instructive of his works, the *Advice to Young Men*. It is in that work also, in his 'Letter to a Lover,' that he gives an account of his first introduction to the worthy young woman who afterwards became his wife, and who appears to have recommended herself to his favour in no small degree by her early rising and her industry.

'When I first saw my wife,' says Cobbett, 'she was thirteen years old, and I was within a month of twenty-one. She was the daughter of a sergeant-major of artillery, and I was the sergeant-major of a regiment of foot, both stationed in forts near the city of St John, in the province of New Brunswick. I sat in the same room with her for about an hour, in company with others, and I made up my mind that she was the very girl for me. That I thought her beautiful is certain, for that I had always said should be an indispensable qualification; but I saw in her what I deemed marks of that sobriety of conduct of which I have said so much, and which has been by far the greatest blessing of my life. It was now dead of winter, and of course the snow several feet deep on the ground, and the weather piercing cold. It was my habit, when I had done my morning's writing, to go out at break of day to take a walk on a hill at the foot of which our barracks lay. In about three mornings after I had first seen her, I had by an invitation to breakfast, got up two young men to join me in my walk, and our road lay by the house of her father and mother. It was hardly light, but she was out on the snow scrubbing out a washing-tub. "That's the girl for me," said I, when we had got out of her hearing. One of these young men came to England soon

afterwards; and he who kept an inn in Yorkshire came over to Preston, at the time of the election, to verify whether I was the same man. When he found that I was, he appeared surprised; but what was his surprise when I told him that those tall young men whom he saw around me, were the sons of that pretty little girl that he and I saw scrubbing out the washing-tub on the snow in New Brunswick, at daybreak in the morning!

‘From the day that I first spoke to her, I never had a thought of her ever being the wife of any other man, more than I had a thought of her being transformed into a chest of drawers; and I formed my resolution at once to marry her as soon as we could get permission, and to get out of the army as soon as I could. So that this matter was at once settled as firmly as if written in the book of fate. At the end of about six months, my regiment, and I along with it, were removed to Fredericton, a distance of 100 miles up the river St John, and which was worse, the artillery were expected to go off a year or two before our regiment. The artillery went, and she along with them; and now it was that I acted a part becoming a real and sensible lover. I was aware that when she got to that gay place, Woolwich, the house of her father and mother, necessarily visited by numerous persons not the most select, might become unpleasant to her; and I did not like, besides, that she should continue to work hard. I had saved 150 guineas, the earnings of my early hours, in writing for the pay-master, the quarter-master, and others, in addition to the savings of my own pay. I sent her all my money before she sailed, and wrote to her to beg of her, if she found her home uncomfortable, to hire a lodging with respectable people; and at anyrate, not to spare the money by any means, but to buy herself good clothes, and to live without hard work, until I arrived in England; and I, in order to induce her to lay out the money, told her that I should get plenty more before I came home.

‘As the malignity of the devil would have it, we were kept abroad two years later than our time, Mr Pitt—England not being then so tame as she is now—having knocked up a dust with Spain about Nootka Sound. O how I cursed Nootka Sound, and poor bawling Pitt too, I am afraid! At the end of four years, however, home I came, landed at Portsmouth, and got my discharge from the army by the great kindness of poor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was then the major of my regiment. I found my little girl a servant-of-all-work—and hard work it was—in the house of a Captain Brisac; and without hardly saying a word about the matter, she put into my hands the whole of my 150 guineas unbroken! Need I tell the reader what my feelings were? Need I tell kind-hearted English parents what effect this anecdote must have produced on the minds of our children? Need I attempt to describe what effect this example ought to have on every young woman who shall do me the honour to read this book? Admiration of her conduct, and self-gratulation

on this indubitable proof of the soundness of my own judgment, were now added to my love of her beautiful person.

'Now, I do not say that there are not many young women of this country who would, under similar circumstances, have acted as my wife did in this case; on the contrary, I hope, and sincerely do believe, that there are. But when her age is considered; when we reflect that she was living in a place crowded, literally crowded, with gaily-dressed and handsome young men, many of whom really far richer and in higher rank than I was, and scores of them ready to offer her their hand; when we reflect that she was living amongst young women who put upon their backs every shilling that they could come at; when we see her keeping the bag of gold untouched, and working hard to provide herself with but mere necessary apparel, and doing all this while she was passing from fourteen to eighteen years of age; when we view the whole of the circumstances, we must say that here is an example which, while it reflects honour on her sex, ought to have weight with every young woman whose eyes or ears this relation shall reach.'

Well might Cobbett indulge in honest exultation over so admirable an instance of constancy and well-governed conduct in a girl of that age, and even in some little self-gratulation at so indubitable a proof of the soundness of his judgment, in having fixed his affections on so worthy an object. To this excellent woman he was married at Woolwich, on the 5th of February 1792, a few months after his return from New Brunswick; and it is pleasant to know, from his own frequent and affectionate mention of her in many parts of his writings, as well as from the testimony of friends, that his domestic life was happier than that of most men. Ten years after their marriage, he speaks of her in his *Political Register* as one 'to whose gentleness, prudence, and fortitude, I owe whatever I enjoy of pleasure, of fortune, or of reputation;' and many years later, Miss Mitford, in a delightful sketch of a visit she once paid to Botley, when Cobbett lived there, describes his wife as 'a sweet motherly woman, realising our notion of one of Scott's most charming characters, Ailie Dinmont, in her simplicity, her kindness, and her devotion to her husband and children.'

Cobbett's honeymoon was disturbed by a disagreeable affair. Soon after his discharge, he had accused four officers of the 54th Regiment of having made false returns of the musters, and of having embezzled the regimental stores. A court-martial was ordered to be held at the Horse Guards, on the 24th of March 1792, for the trial of the parties accused, but Cobbett did not make his appearance. The matter has often been brought up by his enemies, as one in which he acted dishonourably; but his own account of the transaction, which occupies nearly one-half of the *Register* for June 17, 1809, completely justifies the course he took. From his statement of the affair, it is evident that, although he had taken the

utmost pains in getting up his case, he would have been no match for the unscrupulous parties with whom he had to deal, and that his persisting in it would only have had the effect of bringing himself and others into trouble. Under these circumstances, he left England for France before the day of trial, and thus laid himself open to the charge of having libelled the character of honest men, without the slightest foundation for so doing. In his autobiography, he makes no allusion to the cause of his leaving England. He merely says: 'I arrived in France in March 1792, and continued there till the beginning of September, the six happiest months of my life.' He does not mention what part of France he resided in during these six months. All we learn from his brief allusion to the time he sojourned there is, that he never saw Paris. 'I did intend to stay in France,' he says, 'till the spring of 1793, as well to perfect myself in the language as to pass the winter at Paris. But I perceived the storm gathering; I saw that a war with England was inevitable, and it was not difficult to see what would be the fate of Englishmen in that country, where the rulers had laid aside even the appearance of justice and mercy. I wished, however, to see Paris, and actually hired a coach to go thither: I was even on the way, when I heard at Abbeville that the king was dethroned, and his guards murdered. This intelligence made me turn off towards Havre-de-Grace, whence I embarked for America.'

He landed at New York in the month of October, without any very clear notion, apparently, of how he was to earn his living. Twelve months without work, his journey to France, his residence there, and his voyage to America, must have consumed the whole of the 150 guineas which his wife had kept so carefully; so that he must have found it necessary to set to work at something or other as soon as he landed. He had brought with him a letter of recommendation from the American ambassador at the Hague to Mr Jefferson, at that time secretary of state, and ~~this~~ he forwarded without delay; but if he entertained any expectation of aid from that most unlikely quarter, he soon found out his mistake. Mr Jefferson, in his reply, told him that public offices were so few in America, and of so little value, as to offer no resource to talent. Cobbett was not the man to despond, however. With the knowledge of French, which he had acquired during his late residence in France, and his mastery of English grammar, he deemed himself sufficiently qualified to offer his services to Frenchmen as a teacher of English; and, accordingly, he took up his abode in Philadelphia, with the intention of earning his bread by that means. He has nowhere given any account of how he succeeded as a teacher. Here and there, indeed, he makes a stray allusion to the time when he had Frenchmen for his pupils, but in no place does he give any particulars as to whether he was successful or not. Of his domestic life at that period, however, he has given us various interesting sketches in his *Advice to Young Men*,

as he almost invariably refers to some part of his own life as the exemplar which they are to follow. Thus we learn that, during the first year or two of his residence in Philadelphia, he kept no servant, 'though well able to keep one,' so that he cannot have been very badly off. 'And never in my whole life,' says Cobbett, 'did I live in a house so clean, in such trim order; and never have I eaten or drunk, or slept or dressed, in a manner so perfectly to my taste as I did then. I had a great deal of business to attend to, that took me a great part of the day from home; but whenever I could spare a minute from business, the child was in my arms. I rendered the mother's labour as light as I could; any bit of food satisfied me. When watching was necessary, we shared it between us; that famous grammar for teaching French people English—which has been for thirty years, and still is, the great work of the kind throughout all America, and in every nation in Europe—was written by me, in hours not employed in business, and in great part during my share of the night-watchings over a sick, and then only child, who, after lingering many months, died in my arms. This was the way that we went on: this was the way that we began our married life.'

It was in the summer of 1794, a year and a half after he landed in the United States, that William Cobbett commenced his career as a political writer, and from that time till his death the pen was seldom out of his hand. He was then in his thirty-third year, had seen a good deal of the world, and had witnessed the volcanic outburst of the French Revolution, which must have made a deep and lasting impression upon such a mind as his. That strong love of order, and firm sense of duty, which he always preserved; his warm attachment to his native land and all its institutions; his hearty detestation of French philosophy and English Jacobinism; all conspired to make him what we should call a thoroughgoing Tory of the old school, with all its virtues, and no ordinary share of its failings. His eight years' residence in New Brunswick must also have greatly strengthened these feelings. That colony was then the asylum of those 'Yankee loyalists,' to whom he more than once alludes, and from whom he was not likely to derive a very favourable impression of the model republic, then only in its infancy. No wonder, then, that his first appearance as a pamphleteer should have been provoked by the arrival of Dr Priestley in the United States, and by what he calls 'the fulsome and consequential addresses sent him by the pretended patriots, and his canting replies, at once calculated to flatter the people here and to degrade his country and mine.' The English philosopher, who had been forced to leave his native land in consequence of his attachment to the cause of freedom, arrived at New York on the 12th of June 1794, and in the following month Mr Cobbett published his *Observations on the Emigration of Doctor Joseph Priestley*, under the signature of Peter Porcupine, which soon afterwards became so celebrated in England as well as in America. He first offered

the pamphlet to Mr Carey, of Philadelphia, whose treatment of the young author was not very ceremonious. 'Mr Carey received me,' he says, 'as booksellers generally receive authors (I mean authors whom they get little by): he looked at the title from top to bottom, and then at me from head to foot—"No, my lad," says he, "I don't think it will suit." My lad! God in heaven forgive me! I believe that, at that moment, I wished for another yellow fever to strike the city; not to destroy the inhabitants, but to furnish me, too, with the subject of a pamphlet that might make me rich.' He then went to a Mr Bradford, who agreed to publish it at his own risk, and divide the profits with the author; but these did not put much money in his pocket, as the whole amount which fell to his share, when Mr Bradford rendered him an account of the sales, was only 'one shilling and sevenpence half-penny currency (or about elevenpence three-farthings sterling), quite entirely clear of all deductions whatsoever!' After this transaction, Cobbett gave up the plan of publishing and sharing the profits. When he had written a pamphlet, he made a bargain for it at once; and the following list of his various publications during the next two years, shews that the new plan was a decided improvement on the old one, so far as his own interest was concerned:—*Observations*, 20 cents; *Bone to Gnaw*, Part I., 125 dollars; *Kick for a Bite*, 20 dollars; *Bone to Gnaw*, Part II., 40 dollars; *Plain English*, 100 dollars; *New-year's Gift*, 100 dollars; *Prospect*, 18 dollars. Total, 403 dollars 20 cents.

Four hundred dollars in two years was no very large sum; but we must remember that, during this period, he was not depending mainly on his literary labours for his living. He still continued to teach Frenchmen English, at six dollars a month, as we learn from an amusing account he gives in his *Gazette Selections*, of an interview he had, in 1796, with Talleyrand, who offered him twenty dollars a month for lessons in English, and had his liberal offer refused. 'I told him,' says Cobbett, 'that being engaged in a translation for the press, I could not possibly quit home. This difficulty the lame fiend hopped over in a moment: he would very gladly come to my house. I cannot say but it would have been a great satisfaction to me to have seen the ci-devant bishop of Autun, the guardian of the oil that anointed the heads of the descendants of St Louis, come trudging through the dirt to receive a lesson from me; but, on the other hand, I did not want a French spy to take a survey either of my desk or my house. My price for teaching was six dollars a month; he offered me twenty; but I refused, and before I left him, I gave him clearly to understand that I was not to be purchased.'

The fame which Cobbett had acquired as an anonymous author, though quite enough for any ordinary man, was not enough to satisfy him. With his indomitable pugnacity and inordinate self-esteem, he could not bear to remain in the background much longer, and therefore he resolved to commence business as a



bookseller, and come forward openly as the publisher of his own works—a step to which he was doubtless all the more strongly tempted by the knowledge that his pamphlets sold exceedingly well, and that he had not received so large a share of the profits as he fancied he ought to have.

Cobbett's commencement of business as a bookseller, which took place in the spring of 1796, caused an extraordinary sensation in Philadelphia. He had now been nearly two years engaged as a pamphleteer, under the name of Peter Porcupine, and had during that time created a host of enemies, by the freedom with which he had spoken of the faults of America and France, and the undaunted manner in which he had stood forward in defence of his native country against all assailants. So long as he preserved his incognito, the public indignation was kept within comparatively moderate bounds, but when he announced his intention to open a shop, and actually sell his own pamphlets, even his own friends became seriously alarmed for the consequences. The shop which he took appears to have been rather a large one for a man who could not have had much capital of his own. The *Aurora* newspaper speaks of him as having been previously in very low circumstances; so poor, indeed, as to be 'literally without hardly bread to eat, and not a second shirt to his back;' and then goes on to say, that from the extreme of poverty he had suddenly obtained the means of making a better appearance, 'having taken a house for the sale of his poison, at the enormous rent of 1200 dollars a year, and paid a year's rent in advance.' The object of the *Aurora* was to make it appear that Cobbett was an English spy—a charge which he was at very great pains to disprove; but he cautiously abstains from saying anything about his house at 1200 dollars a year, or how he had obtained capital enough to commence so large an undertaking. Had he been able to shew that the money which had enabled him to pay a year's rent in advance, and purchase the stock required for so large a place of business was the fruit of his own labour, he would doubtless have done so. We are left to conclude, therefore, that he must have had assistance from some quarter or other; nor is it surprising that, under the circumstances, his enemies should have endeavoured to fix upon him the title of 'Billy Pitt's agent.' The more probable explanation of the matter is, that he had received assistance from some of his wealthy friends and admirers, of whom he had many in the United States, as well as in our North American colonies. Some years after, when condemned to pay a fine of 5000 dollars, for a libel on Dr Rush, the whole of the money was provided by his friends, or, as he says, 'by British gentlemen in Canada and the United States.' Had they not paid it, his American admirers offered to pay every farthing of the fine, so that he must have had many friends ready to assist him.

Soon after he had opened his shop, he commenced a daily newspaper, under the title of *Porcupine's Gazette*, in which he carried

on the war against French republicanism and American democracy with unrelenting hostility. Those who have any wish to make themselves familiar with the party politics of America from 1795 to 1800, will find ample materials for such a study in the twelve volumes of *Porcupine's Works*, published by Cobbett soon after his return from America. The most remarkable feature in this collection of what he must have deemed the best of his pamphlets and newspaper articles, is the very small amount of autobiography it contains. It is there, indeed, that he gives his life of Peter Porcupine; but that was merely by way of reply to certain libellous attacks upon him. Later in life, his political writings are full of pleasant digressions and episodes, many of them throwing considerable light upon his early life. In his American articles the style is always characteristic. No one acquainted with his writings can fail to recognise the savage personality and withering sarcasm with which he attacks public delinquency wherever he can find it. In that respect, his earliest articles are quite as remarkable as those of his riper years; but they fall far short of the latter in all the finer and more exquisite touches of pathos and humour, and especially in those charming pictures of rural life and scenery which are scattered so lavishly throughout his *Political Register*. But Peter Porcupine was a young and ardent politician, and he lived in the midst of a far more intense political struggle than we are now able to form any just conception of. What wonder that he was in no mood for taking a backward glance, at times, into the poetical aspect of things when he had so hard a daily battle to fight with those whom he looked upon as the enemies of the human race.

Considering the amount of personal feeling with which Cobbett was inspired in almost all his writings, it was natural to expect that he would, sooner or later, come under the lash of the law. He was twice prosecuted for libel during his residence in America, but on only one occasion was he found guilty. The first prosecution, which took place in August 1797, was undertaken at the instance of the Spanish minister in the United States, who fancied that the king of Spain had been insulted in *Porcupine's Gazette*. The trial took place in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Judge M'Kean, a vulgar, bullying lawyer, who presided, and who had become an inveterate enemy of Cobbett, in consequence of his having been exposed in the *Gazette*, did all in his power to bias the minds of the jury, but without effect. A majority ignored the bill, and Peter Porcupine was triumphant. But 'Kite M'Kean,' as Cobbett had nicknamed his enemy, and who appears to have been every way worthy of all the vituperations of the *Gazette*, if ever any man was, soon had his revenge on the insolent Englishman, who so fearlessly exposed all the faults and failings of Jonathan, at a time when he was ten times more sensitive than he is at the present day. A second action for libel was brought against Cobbett by Dr Rush of Philadelphia, who had become

notorious for his mode of treating cases of yellow fever, and for the mortality attending it. The action, which was brought by Rush in the early part of 1798, was kept hanging over the head of Mr Cobbett till the end of the following year, when Judge M'Kean, who had made up his mind to ruin his unrelenting libeller, having got all his preparations completed, brought on the cause for trial, when Cobbett was found guilty, and sentenced to pay 5000 dollars by way of damages. To this large sum must be added the costs of the trial, the sacrifice of property taken in execution, and sold by the sheriff at public auction; 'so that,' as he states in an advertisement announcing a new publication, to be called the *Rushlight*, 'the total of what has been and will be wrested from me by Rush, will fall little short of 8000 dollars.' Whether it was that the new paper did not answer his expectations, or that he had become thoroughly tired of a country which had used him so ill, he very soon extinguished the *Rushlight*, and bade farewell to America.

On the 1st of June 1800, Mr Cobbett sailed from New York for England, after publishing a highly characteristic farewell address to the people of the United States, in the Philadelphia papers. 'You will doubtless be astonished,' he says, 'that after having had such a smack of the sweets of liberty, I should think of rising thus abruptly from the feast; but this astonishment will cease when you consider that, under a general term, things diametrically opposite in their natures are frequently included, and that flavours are not more various than tastes. Thus, for instance, nourishment of every species is called food, and we all like food; but while one is partial to roast beef and plum-pudding, another is distractedly fond of flummery and mush. So it is with respect to liberty, of which, out of its infinite variety of sorts, yours, unfortunately, happens to be the sort which I do not like. . . . To my friends, who are also the real friends of America, I wish that peace and happiness which virtue ought to insure, but which I greatly fear they will not find; and as to my enemies, I can wish them no severer scourge, than that which they are preparing for themselves and their country. With this I depart for my native land, where neither the moth of democracy nor the rust of federalism doth corrupt, and where thieves do not, with impunity, break through and steal 5000 dollars at a time.'

No sooner had he landed in England, than he began to make preparations for the publication of a daily newspaper, which was not quite so formidable an undertaking in those days as it is at present. Previous to doing so, however, he appears to have paid a visit to his birthplace, as will be seen from the following charming description, which first appeared in his *Year's Residence in America*, published in 1828:—'When I returned to England, in 1800, after an absence from the country parts of it of sixteen years, the trees, the hedges, even the parks and woods seemed so small! It made me laugh to hear little gutters that I could jump

over called *rivers*. The Thames was a *creek*. But when, in about a month after my arrival in London, I went to Farnham, the place of my birth, what was my surprise! Everything was become so pitifully *small*! I had to cross, in my post-chaise, the long and dreary heath of Bagshot; then, at the end of it, to mount a hill called Hungry Hill; and from that hill I knew that I should look down into the beautiful and fertile vale of Farnham. My heart fluttered with impatience, mixed with a sort of fear, to see all the scenes of my childhood, for I had learned before, the death of my father and mother. There is a hill not far from the town called Crooksbury Hill, which rises up out of a flat in the form of a cone, and is planted with Scotch fir-trees. Here I used to take the eggs and young ones of crows and magpies. This hill was a famous object in the neighbourhood. It served as the superlative degree of height. "As high as Crooksbury Hill," meant with us the utmost degree of height. Therefore the first object that my eyes sought was this hill. I could not believe my eyes! Literally speaking, I for a moment thought the famous hill removed, and a little heap put in its place; for I had seen in New Brunswick a single rock, or hill of solid rock, ten times as big, and four or five times as high! The postboy going down hill, and not a bad road, whisked me in a few minutes to the Bush Inn, from the garden of which I could see the prodigious sand-hill where I had begun my gardening works. What a nothing! But now came rushing into my mind all at once my pretty little garden, my little blue smock-frock, my little nailed shoes, my pretty pigeons, that I used to feed out of my hands, and the last kind words and tears of my gentle and tender-hearted and affectionate mother! I hastened back into the room; if I had looked a moment longer, I should have dropped. When I came to reflect—what a change! I looked down at my dress—what a change! What scenes I had gone through! How altered my state! I had dined the day before at the secretary of state's, in company with Mr Pitt, and had been waited upon by men in gaudy liveries! I had had nobody to assist me in the world. No teachers of any sort; nobody to shelter me from the consequence of bad, and no one to counsel me to good behaviour. I felt proud. The distinctions of rank, birth, and wealth, all became nothing in my eyes; and from that moment—less than a month after my arrival in England—I resolved never to bend before them.' The dining at Mr Windham's, then secretary at war, in company with Mr Pitt, appears to have made a deep impression upon his mind, for he frequently refers to that memorable event. But his profound admiration of the 'Heaven-born minister' met with no grateful return from that great man, whose aristocratic sensitiveness was no doubt shocked by the indomitable individuality and undisciplined fierceness of Mr Windham's protégé. Perhaps he suspected also, that the Ishmaelite spirit which had enabled Cobbett to render himself so powerful an enemy of democracy in America,

would not be inclined to submit quietly to Treasury influence in England. Whatever the cause may have been, the fact is certain that Mr Pitt shewed an unfriendly spirit towards Mr Cobbett, notwithstanding all the efforts of Mr Windham to recommend him to ministerial favour. In the list of subscribers to the republication, in 1801, of *Porcupine's Works*, in twelve volumes, we find the names of the Prince of Wales and his royal brothers; of Canning, Castlereagh, Huskisson, Rose, Windham, and a whole host of bishops and peers; but we look in vain for that of Mr Pitt; and his unwillingness to lend the influence of his name to that undertaking, must have convinced Mr Cobbett, even if there had been no other evidence, that he need look for no aid from the prime minister of England.

The first number of the *Porcupine*, a new daily paper, 'Printed and published by William Cobbett, No. 3 Southampton Street, Strand,' made its appearance on the 29th of October 1800; and the motto under which it erected its angry quills—'Fear God, Honour the King'—shewed that its politics were decidedly of the Tory and High-church complexion. At that period, Cobbett's hatred of the Dissenters was as hearty and unsparing as his abuse of the Established Church became a few years afterward. In his prospectus he says: 'It is with no small mortification that I find too many of the periodical publications in the hands of fanatics and infidels, all of whom, however numerous their mongrel sects, however opposite their tenets; however hateful their persons to each other, do most cordially unite in their enmity to the national establishments, and most zealously co-operate for their destruction. Convinced as I am from the experience of America, as well as from history in general, that an established church is absolutely necessary to the existence of religion and morality; convinced also that the Church of England, while she is an ornament, an honour, and a blessing to the nation, is the principal pillar to the throne, I trust I shall never be base enough to decline a combat with her enemies, whether they approach me in the lank-locks of the sectary or the scald crop of the Jacobin.' Notwithstanding these strong professions of loyalty, the *Porcupine* does not appear to have been a very profitable speculation; indeed, Cobbett never was successful in any of his attempts to make a popular newspaper. His forte lay chiefly in his power of criticising public men and measures. No writer of the present century could compare with him in that respect; but all his attempts at journalism, strictly speaking, proved signal failures. The *Porcupine* struggled on till the latter end of 1801, when it amalgamated with another daily paper called the *True Briton*, soon after which Mr Cobbett ceased to have any connection with it.

Cobbett had returned from America, as he mentions in one of his *Registers*, with the intention of confining himself to the business of bookselling; and although he had been persuaded by the Tories to

start a daily newspaper, he never gave up his original intention. In 1801, he commenced business, accordingly, with a partner, the firm being 'Cobbett and Morgan, at the Crown and Mitre, Pall Mall.' As to what the nature and extent of his bookselling business may have been, we have little or no means of judging. In an article in the *Register* on the increased duty on printed paper, in 1802, he supports the government, although more immediately interested in the question than almost any man in the kingdom. 'In proportion to our small capital,' he says, 'nobody exports so many books as my partner and myself;' and then he goes on to shew, that if there had been any ground for apprehension that our export trade would be injured by the increased duty, which he denied, he and his partner would have been the first to feel alarm. We may take for granted, therefore, that his knowledge of the American market, together with his colonial connection, had probably enabled Messrs Cobbett and Morgan to carry on a very profitable trade in the exportation of books, the Americans being utterly unable to compete with us at that period.

The first number of the *Weekly Political Register*, with which Cobbett's fame as a writer is so intimately associated, appeared in January 1802, from which time up till 1835, the year of his death, that faithful record of his delightful egotism, his extreme opinionativeness, his matchless invective against all public offenders, and his numberless schemes for putting public affairs in perfect order, was kept up to the last, with unabated vigour, by the marvellous force of his single pen. For the first two or three years, a considerable portion of the *Register* was devoted to the publication of parliamentary proceedings, state papers, and various kinds of useful political and general information. His object was to make it what no weekly newspaper ever can be—a complete register of political intelligence. Nor was it long before he began to find his mistake. One after another, the different departments of routine news and dull official documents were thrust aside to make room for the sparkling, racy, and everwelcome letters from his own pen on all the engrossing topics of the day. In his style he has been compared to Swift, to Defoe, and sometimes to Franklin: nor would it be difficult to find many passages in the *Register* bearing no small resemblance to each of these writers. But, along with much of the circumstantial, graphic, narration-talent of Defoe, the charming simplicity and homely wisdom of Franklin, the idiomatic terseness and humour of Swift, there is an abounding heartiness and a garrulity in most of his writings which stamps them with a special charm, for which we might search in vain through the whole of our ablest political writers.

As a commercial speculation, the *Register* must have been highly successful. By the end of 1803, it had attained a circulation of 4000—rather a large number, when we look at the size and price of the paper. At that time it consisted of sixteen pages only, and did not contain more than about two-thirds of the contents of a

single number of *Chambers's Journal*. As the price was 10d., and there was no expense for contributions, it must have yielded a handsome profit to the editor and proprietor. But Cobbett did not preserve through life the thrifty habits which enabled him to save 150 guineas when he was a sergeant-major. Till the close of his life, he always continued to work as hard as he had done while in the army; but although he earned a large amount of money in his day, he frequently fell into pecuniary difficulties.

When Cobbett returned from America, he was an ultra Tory, and he continued to support ministers for the first two or three years of his journalism with the most enthusiastic zeal and devotion. In his *Register*, however, he very soon began to shew a spirit of independence in his remarks on public affairs, which could not fail to sever his connection with the Church-and-king party, by whom he had been received with open arms when he landed in England. His desertion of the Tory party has generally been ascribed to the supercilious manner in which he was treated by Mr Pitt, but on that point we have no direct evidence. All we know is, that after having been for several years the advocate and eulogist of that minister's character and policy, he became his bitterest enemy. The precise date of this change it would be somewhat difficult to determine; but his hostility to government, and his leaning to the popular party, became very decided after his first conviction for libel, which took place on the 24th of May 1804. On that occasion he was found guilty of having published certain libels in the *Register*, tending to bring the Earl of Hardwick, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and several Irish officials, into contempt, and sentenced to pay a fine of L.500. Two days after, an action for damages, which were laid at L.10,000, was brought against Mr Cobbett by Mr Plunkett, attorney-general for Ireland, for a libel on him, in the same article in which were the libels on Lord Hardwick and his colleagues. The jury returned a verdict against the defendant, but they awarded only L.500 in the shape of damages. These prosecutions had been undertaken, as was generally understood, with a view to silence Cobbett; but he was not the man to be put down in that or in any other fashion. Instead of making him more guarded in his criticism of ministers, they only stirred up his hatred of 'the betrayers of the public trust,' as he now styled them, to a more intense degree. The meetings of the people to discuss and condemn the arbitrary measures and corrupt practices of government were now, also, treated in a more respectful manner, nor did he scruple to defend Sir Francis Burdett from the charge of Jacobinism, which some of the ministerial organs had brought against him. The change in the tone of his politics had become very decided by the end of 1804—so much so, indeed, that he makes a distinct reference to the subject in his 'Address to the Public' at the opening of 1805. Not that he considers himself to have changed: it is ministers that have veered round, while he has

been obliged, as an honest journalist, to blame them for their desertion of principle. In reply to the statements of the ministerial press, that his opposition to government had injured the circulation of the *Register*, he affirms that, 'notwithstanding the unexampled depopulation of the town, during the six months embraced by the volume just finished, there were many more copies of this work sold during that time than during any former six months since the commencement of the work.' A few of his subscribers, indeed, had found fault with the course he was taking, but a far larger number had expressed their satisfaction with the way in which he attacked ministers. He had received '150 written assurances' from persons who had formerly admired Mr Pitt, that the arguments in the *Register* had destroyed their faith in that statesman's political wisdom and integrity, and 'only seven letters expressing dissent' from his opinions on that head. With so large a majority of his constituents in favour of the course he had been pursuing, no wonder that he felt encouraged to go on.

Although steadily opposed to the Pitt ministry, and anxious to see Sir Francis Burdett returned for Middlesex, he did not see his way with regard to parliamentary reform for some time. Even in 1806, he contended that so long as the funding system remained, there was no good to be expected from any attempt to reform parliament. As for universal suffrage, he says; 'I have seen the effects of it too attentively, and with too much disgust, ever to think of it with approbation.' He was, however, gradually brought more and more into contact with the Radical party, who gladly hailed the accession to their ranks of so powerful a writer. Before long, he had become one of the most fearless champions of reform. The vindictive style in which the ministerial journals spoke of him and his *Register*, shewed that his merciless blows were felt by those in power, and that no opportunity would be lost of making him feel the vengeance of the law. For awhile, the pecuniary warnings he had received in 1804 had had the effect of making him more guarded in his language, but the impetuosity of his temper could not always be restrained. In the *Register* of the 1st of July 1809, he made some very severe remarks on the flogging of five soldiers belonging to a militia regiment then stationed at Ely, under a guard of the German Legion, which attracted the notice of the attorney-general, Sir Vicary Gibbs. Owing to some cause or other, the trial was postponed till the summer of 1810. The information was tried on the 15th of June, before Lord Ellenborough, and Cobbett was again found guilty. On the 9th of July, he was brought up for judgment, and sentenced to be imprisoned in Newgate for two years; to pay a fine of L.1000; and at the expiration of the two years, to give security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in L.3000, and two securities in L.1000 each. So severe a sentence was not intended merely as a punishment for the libel he had written, but



by way of revenge for the way in which he had dared to attack ministers, and for his systematic attempts to bring the government of that day into contempt.

In his *Register* of the 14th July 1810, dated from Newgate, he alludes to his incarceration in the following terms:—‘After having published seventeen volumes of this work, embracing the period of eight years and a half, during which time I have written with my own hand nearly 2000 articles upon various subjects, without having, except in one single instance, incurred even the threats of the law, I begin the eighteenth volume in a prison. In this respect, however, I only share the lot of many men who have inhabited this prison before me; nor have I the smallest doubt that I shall be enabled to follow the example of those men. On the triumphing, the boundless joy, the feasting and shouting of the peculators or public robbers, and of all those, whether profligate or hypocritical villains, of whom I have been the scourge, I look with contempt, knowing very well, feeling in my heart that my situation, even at this time, is infinitely preferable to theirs; and as to the future, I can reasonably promise myself days of peace and happiness, while continual dread must haunt their guilty minds; while every stir and every sound must make them quake for fear. *Their* day is yet to come!’ Throughout the rest of his life, this feeling of vengeance against his enemies never ceased to animate him. Again and again, he returns to his imprisonment in Newgate for having commented on the flogging of English soldiers under German bayonets, and seldom without vowing revenge against his persecutors.

At the time of his imprisonment, Cobbett's family were residing at Botley, a fine old mansion in Hampshire, ‘with a beautiful lawn and gardens sweeping down to the Bursledon river.’ There he had lived for a number of years as a gentleman farmer, indulging his love for gardening and agricultural pursuits, at the same time that he was carrying on the war against Pitt's funding system, and the government by which that system was maintained. This seems to have been by far the happiest and most prosperous period of his life. The *Weekly Register* yielded a handsome income, gave ample scope for the exercise of his restless literary and political ambition, and yet did not engross the whole of his time. He had a large amount of leisure, which he mainly spent in the midst of his affectionate family, his garden, and his farm, as he does not seem to have mixed much in public affairs at that period. The smoke and bustle of London could easily be endured for one or two days in the week, when he knew that he could escape at any moment to the pure atmosphere and delightful seclusion of Botley.

It was during his residence in Hampshire that Miss Mitford, then a mere girl, paid him that visit of which she has given so pleasant a description in her *Reminiscences*; and it would seem from her account that he lived in a most bountiful style.

'There was a large fluctuating series of guests for the hour, or guests for the day, of almost all ranks and descriptions, from the earl and his countess to the farmer and his dame. The house had room for all, and the hearts of the owners would have had room for three times the number. I never saw hospitality more genuine; more simple, or more thoroughly successful in the great end of hospitality—the putting everybody completely at ease. There was not the slightest attempt at finery, or display, or gentility. They called it a farmhouse, and everything was in accordance with the largest idea of a great English yeoman of the old time. Everything was excellent, everything abundant—all served with the greatest nicety by trim waiting-damsels; and everything went on with such quiet regularity, that of the large circle of guests not one could find himself in the way.'

Of Cobbett himself, who was then in the height of his political reputation, she speaks in the most enthusiastic terms. His unflinching good-humour and good spirits, his early rising, his heartiness and love of field-sports, seem to have made a deep impression on the young girl, who little thought at that time that she also would become not less celebrated than her host for her descriptions of English rural scenery. As to his personal appearance, she describes him as 'a tall, stout man, fair and sunburnt, with an air compounded of the soldier and the farmer, to which his habit of wearing an eternal red waistcoat contributed not a little.' His beautiful farm and garden, and the manner in which they were cultivated, called forth her warmest approbation. 'The fields lay along the Bursledon river, and might have been shewn to a foreigner as a specimen of the richest and loveliest English scenery. In the cultivation of his garden, too, he displayed the same taste. Few persons excelled him in the management of vegetables, fruits, and flowers. His green Indian corn, his Carolina beans, his water-melons, could hardly have been excelled even at New York. His wall-fruit was equally splendid; and much as flowers have been studied since that day, I never saw a more glowing or a more fragrant autumn garden than that at Botley, with its pyramids of hollyhocks, and its masses of China-asters, of foxgloves, of mignonette, and of variegated geranium.' Well might Cobbett feel enraged at being torn away from so delightful a retirement. In his active bustling life, he had met with several reverses; but never had he encountered such a change as the transition from that paradise at Botley, and the happy life he led there, surrounded by his family and friends, to the strong room at Newgate! His spirits never sunk, however: he still went on from week to week with his letters to public men; still used the lash as vigorously as ever against 'all knaves and dastards.' The only difference which the readers of the *Register* could perceive was, that his letters were now dated from Newgate instead of Botley. As to his farming operations, he carried them on by letter also, as well as that could be done. 'I gave all the orders,'

he says, 'whether as to purchases, sales, ploughing, sowing, breeding—in short, with regard to everything, and the things were in endless number and variety, and always full of interest.' To carry on this correspondence, he had always one or two of his children with him, having hired the best part of the keeper's house 'at twelve guineas a week.' That item alone, for two years, would more than double the fine he had been sentenced to pay, so that the expenses altogether must have made a very considerable inroad on his profits, while his affairs were at the same time suffering from his two years' absence from home.

A public dinner was given to Mr Cobbett, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, on the 9th of July 1812, to celebrate his liberation from Newgate, which took place on that day. Sir Francis Burdett presided on the occasion, and, among other toasts, proposed: 'Our sincere congratulations on the release of that able advocate of parliamentary reform, and zealous opponent of the flogging system—William Cobbett.' In returning thanks, Cobbett replied at some length to the calumnies which his enemies had been busily circulating, in the hope of creating some confusion at the dinner. The *Times* had been accusing him of having changed his opinions, and referred to his attacks upon Sir Francis Burdett some ten years previously. He frankly admitted that he had at one time held opinions widely different from those which he now advocated, but that was no proof of insincerity. Supposing he had been wrong, he had since fairly and candidly acknowledged his error: 'Alteration of sentiment was not to be deemed a demerit in a man, unless it should appear that such alteration had been caused by interested motives.'

He was now at liberty once more, with the character of a martyr in the cause of freedom, and the reputation of being the ablest and most daring champion of the people's cause. But his imprisonment, and the fine of L.1000, which he was obliged to pay for the freedom of his remarks on flogging, gave a serious shock to his circumstances, and ultimately tended in no small degree to land him in those pecuniary embarrassments which caused him to leave the country in 1817. In early life he had been a rigid economist; but the success of his *Register* appears to have gradually led him into an expensive style of living, which, though warranted in some measure by the income he was then making, was ill calculated for any reverse which might occur. In addition to his farm, which must have required a considerable amount of capital at a time when everything was so dear, he had embarked in publishing speculations on a large scale. At the time of his imprisonment, he had undertaken and was carrying on three publications besides the *Political Register*—namely, the *Parliamentary History*, the *Parliamentary Debates*, and the *State Trials*. All of these were works requiring a large expenditure of capital, and yielding only a slow return. At first, he was no doubt able to meet his printer's bills with hard cash; but

ultimately, in spite of his abhorrence of the accommodation-bill system, he must have been obliged, like Sir Walter Scott, at a later period, under similar circumstances, to draw upon the future. In a trial which took place after his return from America in 1820, it was stated by Mr Scarlett that, at the very time, from 1812 to 1817, when he was directing all his energies to write down paper-money, his various farming and publishing speculations were supported by accommodation-bills to the extent of L.60,000 or L.70,000. This paper, which Cobbett hated so much, was negotiated by Mr Wright, with whom he was many years in partnership; and the accounts between the parties became so much involved, that, to use Cobbett's own expression, 'the devil himself could not unravel them.' It was these monetary difficulties, aggravated by the ruinous fall in prices at the close of the war, which led to his sudden flight to America in March 1817. The ostensible cause of his leaving England at that time was his fear of being again sent to Newgate. According to his representation, ministers, in bringing forward the Six Acts Bill for suppressing freedom of discussion, had mainly in view the *Weekly Register*, which had been reduced to 2d. some months previously, and had attained a weekly circulation of 50,000. From his farewell address, it would seem that he was under the influence of a panic, in which pecuniary and political considerations may have had an equal share. A list of his creditors at the time he left England, shews him to have been owing nearly L.40,000; so that one cannot feel much surprise at his coming to the conclusion that England was going to ruin, when he reflected upon the rapid changes which had recently taken place in the value of property, and from which he, as a farmer and as a publisher, had suffered so severely.

Cobbett remained in America about two years and a half, during which time he kept up his *Registers* regularly, shewing up the 'sons and daughters of corruption' as fearlessly as ever. In addition to his literary labours, he took a farm, called Hyde Park, at North Hampstead, Long Island, where he indulged his love of rural occupations, and where he sustained a very serious loss of property on the 20th of May 1819, by a fire which consumed his dwelling-house and the greater part of his farming stock. This blow seems to have made him think of returning home once more, now that England seemed as if it would weather the storm. Accordingly, he left New York in October 1819, a few weeks after the Peterloo Massacre, and arrived at Liverpool on the 20th of November, bringing with him the bones of Thomas Paine, for whose genius he had suddenly conceived a singular regard, on account of his exposure of the funding system. Soon after his arrival in London, he started a daily paper called *Cobbett's Evening Post*, which lasted only about two months. At the end of that time, he found that the *Register* would be as much as he could manage with satisfaction to himself or justice to the public. It

was while the daily paper was in existence, that he made his first unsuccessful attempt to enter parliament, by standing for the representation of Coventry in March 1820, when he polled only 352 votes. His second attempt, in June 1826, when he contested Preston with Mr Stanley, the present Earl of Derby, met with no better success—the numbers at the close of the poll being for Stanley, 3044; Wood, 1982; Cobbett, 995. In spite of these two defeats, however, he still adhered to the determination to become a member of parliament. He flattered himself that, were he once in that assembly, he would very soon convince a majority of its members of the wisdom and excellence of his plans for remedying public grievances. On the 10th of April 1830, he issued an address, suggesting that a subscription should be opened in every county in England, for the purpose of purchasing for him an estate sufficient for the qualification of two members—himself, and another whom he should nominate. The sum required was about L.10,000, which could easily be raised, he thought. ‘Two pounds each from every reader of the *Register* would about do the thing. Forbearance from a single glass of grog for one market-day on the part of each farmer would do the thing.’ But neither the farmers nor the readers of the *Register* were willing to make such a sacrifice to see him in parliament. The entire sum subscribed in aid of his L.10,000 scheme amounted only to L.27, 2s.—a most lame and impotent conclusion to so grand a project.

The year 1831 was signalised by the trial of Mr Cobbett for the publication of a seditious and malicious libel, tending to excite the agricultural labourers to acts of sedition, insurrection, and arson. The article which had provoked this proceeding on the part of ministers, was one entitled ‘The Rural War,’ in which he had commented with his usual freedom and boldness on the condition of the peasantry, the alleged circumstances which had led to their present misery, and the best means of relieving it. If Cobbett had had to defend himself against such a government prosecution ten years previously, he would have had little chance of escape; but 1831 was not a favourable year for putting down libellous attacks, nor could the Whigs have committed a greater indiscretion than they did, when they gave their greatest enemy so rare an opportunity of exposing their inconsistency, and of shewing how their professed affection for the liberty of the press had given place to the most arbitrary notions on that head now that they were in office. From the beginning of the trial till its close, the whole proceedings were calculated to furnish Cobbett with new materials for carrying on the war against the Whigs, and he made ample use of them when the trial was over. He defended himself in a most able and eloquent speech of six hours in length. The attorney-general then replied, and after Lord Tenterden had summed up, then a jury retired at five minutes past six o’clock. No verdict being returned by the night, and at a little before nine in the morning from her accusers, they stated that they could not agree; upon which

they were discharged. The decision of the jury met with general approbation, and from all parties Cobbett received congratulations on his triumph over ministers.

In the autumn of 1832, Mr Cobbett paid a visit to Scotland, where he was welcomed by the Radicals as 'the ablest of writers, the most consummate politician, the fearless and uncompromising advocate of the rights of the people.' During his tour in the north, he published vivid descriptions in the *Register* of what he saw, well calculated to flatter the pride of the people of Scotland, against whom his prejudices had been quite as strong as those of Dr Johnson. In the preface to his *Tour in Scotland*, which he published in the following year, he confesses that though he had never carried his notions of the sterility and worthlessness of Scotland, and of the niggardly character of its inhabitants, so far as many others have, yet he had not been able to prevent himself from imbibing in some degree 'the prejudices which a long train of causes, beginning to operate nearly a thousand years ago, have implanted in the minds of Englishmen;' and as he had allowed those prejudices to slip out now and then throughout his writings, he deemed it his duty to make amends for that injustice by shewing what Scotland really is.

Soon after his return from Scotland, the first general election under the Reform Bill took place, when Mr Cobbett, who had been brought forward as a candidate both at Manchester and Oldham, was returned for the latter borough along with Mr Fielden, by a majority of four to one over their opponents. In Manchester, 1305 electors voted for Mr Cobbett; and the number would have been much greater, in all probability, but for the decision at Oldham, which was known in Manchester by noon on the last polling-day.

The friends and admirers of Mr Cobbett, who had been so anxious to see him in parliament, had now obtained their wish. He was now a portion of the 'collective wisdom;' nor was it long before he took occasion to give the House a sample of his eloquence. In the debate on the choice of a Speaker, on the 31st of January 1833, he delivered his first parliamentary speech, which excited no small amount of good-humoured merriment by the homely, colloquial style in which it was couched, not less than by the originality of his remarks. On the 7th of February, he made a long speech on the moving the address, when he was a good deal annoyed by the usual cries of 'Question, question;' 'Divide, divide,' by which the House signifies that it is tired. He was not the man, however, to be put down by any such demonstrations. He told the disturbers, in a very decided tone, that the division should not take place for a couple of hours at least, unless he were allowed to give the reasons for his vote—a threat which had the intended effect of producing quietness. But although he spoke frequently, and soon made the House familiar with all his notions about the currency, the malt-tax, and taxation generally,

his warmest admirers could not help perceiving that his influence was lessened rather than increased by his return to parliament. In a lecture or a letter to the readers of the *Register*, he could magnify whatever question he took up, so as to make it seem unanswerable for the moment. But he was not fitted for a deliberative assembly like the House of Commons. His age, too, rendered it unlikely that he could adapt himself to the political atmosphere of parliament; nor was it long before his constitution began to shew that it was unfitted to sustain the evil effects of the late hours and bad ventilation of the House.

Prior to his becoming a member of the imperial legislature, Mr Cobbett had no very exalted opinion of the House of Commons, and it is evident that his more familiar acquaintance with 'the finest club in the world,' as it has been styled, did not raise the character of its members in his estimation. The *Weekly Register* is full of the most amusing complaints, regarding the careless, undignified way in which parliament manages the business of the nation. The want of proper accommodation was also a frequent source of grumbling. 'Why,' says the member for Oldham, 'are we squeezed into so small a space, that it is absolutely impossible that there should be calm and regular discussion, even from that circumstance alone? Why do we live in this hubbub? Why are we exposed to all these inconveniences? Why are 658 of us crammed into a space that allows to each of us no more than a foot and a half square, while at the same time, each of the servants of the king, whom *we* pay, has a palace to live in, and more unoccupied space in that palace, than the little *hole* into which we are all crammed, to make the laws by which this great kingdom is governed?' Few persons, he contends, could sit in that place as constantly as he had done, without injuring their health. He had never seen a regiment of soldiers of which the private men could have kept up the regular and constant attendance which he had given, without breaking down. His own power of enduring fatigue and late hours, he ascribes to his simple and temperate habits, never dining out, and having nothing to annoy him, except the very common grievance at that period of too many letters. But it was not the number that annoyed him, so much as the cost of postage, which formed a very heavy tax. 'Twelve letters a day,' he says, 'amount to L.18, 5s. a year, which is as much as is probably necessary to maintain my house one week out of the fifty-two. I need say no more to convince any reasonable man, that all two-penny post letters should come to me post-free.' Some of his correspondents, too, were persons who had no business with him—who wrote merely to obtain his autograph. Others annoyed him by adding '*Esquire*' to his name; a title to which he considered he had no title. The worst evil connected with his parliamentary duties, however, was the necessity of spending so much of his time in the close and heated atmosphere of the House of Commons. In spite of his robust health and

his temperate habits, the hard work at home and long hours in the House were too much for him ; and to these causes, doubtless, may be attributed the illness by which he was cut off so suddenly at last.

At the general election which followed the resignation of the Whig ministry in 1834, and the brief return of Sir Robert Peel to Downing Street, Mr Cobbett was again returned for Oldham, and resumed his regular attendance in the House in spite of an inflammatory attack from which he was suffering. When the Marquis of Chandos brought on his motion for the repeal of the malt-tax, Mr Cobbett attempted to speak in favour of it, but, owing to inflammation of the throat, from which he had not recovered, he could not make himself heard. He remained to vote on that occasion, thereby increasing his complaint. It was not till after another instance of the same imprudence, that he felt the serious nature of his illness, and saw the necessity of taking some care of himself. He resolved to go down to his farm near Farnham, and get rid of his hoarseness and inflammation. After a few weeks there, he seemed to have almost recovered his usual health, but he imprudently took tea in the open air, on the evening of Thursday, June 11, and the consequence was a violent relapse of his complaint. With a few fluctuations, he lingered for a week, during which he recovered so far as to be able to talk in the most sprightly manner upon politics and farming, and to express a wish for 'four days' rain for the Cobbett corn and the root crops.'

On the day previous to his death, he could not rest in the house, but insisted on being carried round the farm. The strong man, who had hardly ever known what illness was, seemed as if he would set disease at defiance to the very last. That night he grew more and more feeble—the journey round the farm had been the last flicker in the socket. About one o'clock on Thursday morning, the 18th of June 1835, William Cobbett expired, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

On the 27th June, the funeral took place from Normandy Farm. The procession was attended by Mr Fielden, M.P., Mr O'Connell, Mr Wakley, and several other members of parliament. By the time it had reached Farnham, it was swelled by thousands of labourers in their smock-frocks and straw-hats, who followed the procession to the church-yard, where the mortal remains of England's greatest self-taught prose writer were deposited beside those of his humble ancestors.

And now, looking back at the forty years of stern battling with abuses which he maintained so resolutely, many persons scruple not to affirm that Cobbett deserves no higher place in history than is given to a Wilkes, a Sacheverel, or any of those other self-exaggerating agitators who have disturbed society at various periods during the last two centuries, and whose names must speedily sink into well-merited oblivion. Those who form such an estimate, however, only shew their ignorance of the man, and of the powerful



WILLIAM COBBETT.

influence he exercised on public affairs, more especially during the last twenty or thirty years of his active and laborious life. Without speaking of the many admirable volumes he wrote—the *Advice to Young Men*, the *Rural Rides*, the *Year's Residence in America*, the *Cottage Economy*, the *Tour in Scotland*, the *English Gardener*; the *Woodlands*, almost any one of which would have given him a high place in literature as one of the finest painters of rural life—no one who is familiar with his political writings, and who has paid attention to the gradual progress of the great 'Condition of England Question' since the end of the war, can fail to perceive that William Cobbett did more to awaken public opinion to a sense of its duty towards the poor, gave a more powerful impulse to the movement for bettering the condition of the working-classes, which is rapidly becoming the greatest question of the day, than any writer of the present century. What higher praise could be awarded to a public journalist!





## A L I C E H O F F M A N N :

### AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

#### I.

**Y** earliest recollections—and they are of many years ago, for I am no longer young—carry me back to a dark and dirty room in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane. The ceiling was smoke-stained, the paper faded and torn, and the windows, from never being cleaned, admitted no prospect and scarcely any sunshine from without. There was a battered pianoforte in one corner, of that old-fashioned kind I knew afterwards was called a clavecin. This was crowded with heaps of yellow dusty music. There was also a bass viol, several violins, and my father's music-desk, for

he was a musician, and played in the band of Drury Lane Theatre. I also recollect that a portrait of Mrs Billington, and a print of David Garrick were suspended on the walls, and that my father's easy-chair was generally occupied by a large black cat, the dearest playfellow of my childhood. I was a lonely, motherless, neglected little creature, without amusement and without education. I could not read. There were some dusty volumes lying about, with curious frontispieces, and portraits of a past generation of actors in strange dresses, scattered at long intervals amid their pages. These I used to look at day by day with hopeless admiration and perplexity, and turn over leaf after leaf of those mysterious printed characters which had no meaning for my eyes, till I wept for very ignorance and shame. I used now and then to see my father reading the newspaper on a Sunday morning, and sometimes smiling over its contents. I never dared to ask him if I might learn to do the same, for he was harsh and cold, and seldom seemed aware even of my presence; but I have sat for many a silent hour and watched the motion of his eyes along the lines with inexpressible longing.

I have said that these are my earliest recollections; but I seemed even then to have dim remembrances, broken and shadowy enough, of a time long before. They were not so much remembrances, either, as reflections from a faded light, like images mirrored dreamily in water. Fragments of old rhymes and fairy stories floated in my mind, mingled with the tones of a soft voice; and these I used to strive to summon back again, and loved to connect the scattered links with the weavings of my own fancy. Sometimes too, when I was lying in my bed, with the moonlight streaming in through the uncurtained window, I woke from pleasant dreams in which I seemed to see a gentle face, forgotten, yet familiar, and then slept to dream again.

I was very young at this time; not more, I should fancy, than seven years of age; but I never knew the exact date of my birth, nor do I now. The house in which we lived was let out from kitchen to attic. The ground-floor and shop belonged to a Jew, who made up clothing for the stage, and kept all kinds of hideous masks, glittering dresses, swords, and fearful things, for hire. If ever I went out into the street, I hurried past his door with uncontrollable terror. I cannot even now recall, without a shudder, the hideous laugh with which he used to greet my flying steps, and the way in which he lay in wait for my return, thrusting his yellow face through the half-opened door, and asking me if I would not give one little kiss to old Solomon!

I had a beautiful voice. I used to sing for hours in the day, and delighted, in my father's absence, to repeat, in my clear childish treble, the airs and brilliant variations I sometimes heard him practising upon the violin. From daily exercise in this amusement, I attained to such proficiency that I could warble the most difficult bravura passages with perfect fluency.

One morning as I was singing thus, the door opened slowly and softly, and a gentleman looked in.

'Go on, my dear,' said he with the kindest smile in the world; 'go on, and sing that pretty tune again for me.'

I was silent.

'What! quite dumb?' said he, coming over and taking a seat opposite to me. 'Well, if you will not sing, tell me your name.'

The gentleman's voice and eyes were so pleasant, that I contrived to stammer: 'Alice Hoffmann.'

He looked surprised, and told me that he knew my father quite well, but had never supposed he had a little girl like me. And then he took me on his knee, and kissed my cheek, and shewed me his watch; and so winning my confidence with gentle words, persuaded me to sing to him again. He listened to me very attentively; and when I had done, asked me to repeat it. My childish vanity was pleased for the first time, and I sung one of my father's brilliant pieces.

'Thank you, Alice,' he said at the close of my second performance; 'you are a good child, and now I will sing you a song in return.' And instantly the gentleman assumed the most comical expression I had ever seen, placed his hands on his knees, and began to sing. I have now no recollection of the words or the air, but I remember dancing and rolling about in ecstasies of mirth. He seemed to tie up every feature into knots, his mouth extended itself from ear to ear, and his words poured forth as if he had a dozen tongues.

In the midst of a torrent of volubility on the part of the gentleman, and my shrill peals of laughter, the door opened suddenly, and my father walked in. The stranger started, and his face became instantly transformed to its previous mild good-natured repose: the merriment died away upon my lips; my father looked sternly amazed; and as he advanced towards the visitor, reddened, and bowed with some formality.

'You are surprised to find me here, Hoffmann,' said he, blushing also; 'but I came to see Solomon down stairs about some properties, and hearing your child's voice singing overhead, I stole up stairs to listen to her.'

'It is a poor place for you to enter, Mr Grimaldi,' said my father, proudly.

'Poor, with this little treasure in it!' exclaimed Mr Grimaldi, taking me by the hand: 'I should think my home rich if I possessed her! What a magnificent voice the child has!'

'Indeed?' said my father, with a glance of cold surprise. 'I never heard her sing a note!'

The strange gentleman whistled and stared, and looked from my father's face to mine with a curious expression of bewilderment.

My father turned stiffly towards me: 'Can you sing, Alice?' he asked in a harsh tone.

I faltered, and looked down ; but my friend answered for me.

‘Sing now,’ said my father peremptorily.

I felt as if I could not utter a note, if I were to be killed for it the next moment ; but the gentleman saw my embarrassment, and kindly whispered some words of praise and encouragement in my ear. I began the air I had last been singing ; but, alas ! at the fourth or fifth bar, my voice and memory failed ; I trembled, stopped, and burst into a passion of tears.

‘Pooh,’ said my father contemptuously, ‘the child can’t sing. She has no more voice than my cat.’

The driving wind and rain beat pitilessly that night against my chamber-window, as I lay shivering upon my little bed, and sobbed myself to sleep.

## II.

I know not how it happened, but my father shortly after this discovered that I could sing. I imagine that he must have listened at the doors, and returned to the house some time or other in the middle of the day to do so ; for I soon, alas ! had a terrible proof of his confidence in my powers.

It might have been perhaps three weeks after Mr Grimaldi’s visit, when the following events took place :—

It was winter-time. My father was out as usual. I had a scanty fire burning in the grate, which the old woman who waited on the lodgers from time to time replenished. I never was permitted to have a candle, so I used to sit singing, or strumming on the old clavecin by the faint firelight, till I felt tired or sorrowful enough to go up stairs to bed. This night I happened to be very weary, so I raked the ashes out somewhat earlier than usual, crept up softly to my room, and soon fell into a profound and dreamless sleep.

I might have been there some three or four hours, when I was roused by a heavy hand laid upon my shoulder, and a bright light before my eyes.

‘Alice,’ said a stern loud voice ; ‘Alice, get up directly !’

I was so terrified and confused, that I scarcely understood a word ; I did not even know where I was, and I began to cry.

‘Stop that noise, child,’ said my father in a deep smothered voice that I used to dread ; ‘get up and dress directly. Do you hear ? Be quick !’ And giving me a parting shake, with a half-uttered threat, he laid the candle down, and left the room.

Breathless, weeping, and frightened, I obeyed his directions. The night was very cold, and seemed to pierce through me on leaving my warm bed. I strove to wash the traces of tears from my cheeks, and glanced at the window. All without was intensely black, and a thick mist was drizzling against the panes. I heard my father’s step upon the stairs.

'Are you ready?' asked the imperious voice.

I was ready; so I went down stairs, and there I found my father and another person. The stranger was a large man with a red, cross face, and a coarse voice; and I felt afraid of him.

'Is this the child?' said he. 'She's very small.'

'So much the better, sir,' said my father; 'the greater wonder.'

'What may be her age now?' asked the stranger.

'Six or seven, I suppose,' replied my father with an odd smile; 'but we'll call it five, Mr Smith, or four if you like best. No one will be likely to search the register.'

And then they both laughed; but I was ready to cry again, for I felt so apprehensive. I believe my fears were chiefly that I was going to be sold and carried away, so mere a child was I then!

'Well, Hoffmann, let's hear her first,' said the stranger when he had done laughing.

'Sing a song, Alice,' said my father; 'and mind, if you behave now as you did the other day, I'll turn you out of doors into the street!'

The alarm which this threat occasioned me had the effect of giving me a sort of desperate courage. I sang, I know not what; but the stranger nodded his head and rubbed his hands, and my father, instead of scolding me, began talking earnestly with him in an under-tone for some minutes.

'Then it is settled, Smith,' said my father triumphantly; 'and when shall we begin?'

'No time like the present,' said Mr Smith: 'let her begin to-night.'

'To-night!' exclaimed my father; 'but it's past eleven!'

'No matter—they never go till three or four in the morning.'

'Put on your bonnet, child,' said my father; 'we are going out.'

O how wet, and cold, and slippery it was out in the dark streets! Not a shop was open—scarcely a creature stirring, save now and then a solitary watchman. I remember that dreadful night as well as if it were yesterday: the standing pools of water in the pavement—the long dark streets—the pale flickering oil-lamps—the misty rain that clung to my hair, and wet my clothes nearly through—the cold raw wind, and the coaches that once or twice rattled past us on the way. It was a long, long distance that we went—down so many streets and turnings that my limbs ached, and I thought we never should arrive. Then we crossed a long bridge over a broad bright river, with the rain misting down upon the water, and stopped at last before the door of a large shop, with all its shutters closed, and a lamp hanging outside. Mr Smith knocked heavily upon the door, and a sleepy-looking man opened it and admitted us. The moment we were inside, I heard a great noise of people talking and laughing, a jingling of glasses, and a sound like beating upon wood.

'Alice,' said my father, stooping down and putting his lips close to my ear, 'you are going to sing presently. Do your best,

and you shall have a doll; break down, and'—— He said no more, but his voice and look were enough.

In another moment I found myself in a room full of company, and brilliantly lighted. At first, the noise, the heated atmosphere, the glare, the clouds of tobacco-smoke, and the terror I experienced, deprived me of all powers of observation; but when some moments had elapsed, I began to look round and examine the features of my audience. My father had taken a seat near the end of the table, and I was placed beside him. Mr Smith was a long way off at the head of the table, and his appearance was welcomed with a great thumping and the rattle of glasses. All the company consisted of men, and most of them looked merry and good-natured.

Then Mr Smith stood up, and said something about my father, and a great deal about me, and I was called upon to sing. I distinctly recollect an old gentleman lifting me up, and placing me standing on a chair, that I might be seen and heard. In doing so, he found how cold and wet I was, and gave me something to taste out of his glass. Whatever it was, it did me good at the time; the faces around me looked smiling and pleasant, and I sang as well as I could. Then there was such a shouting and jingling and clapping, that I was almost frightened at first, and thought the gentlemen were angry; but I found, instead, that they wanted another song. Then I sang again, and, having another sip from my friend's tumbler, felt very merry and warm indeed, and became quite happy. I do not know how many times I could have sung that night, but at last my father said I should not go on any longer, and I was carried into another room, and laid upon a sofa, with a covering of heavy coats to keep me warm, where I soon fell sound asleep. Almost all the gentlemen had given me money when I was taken away, and many had kissed me, and said: 'Good-night, little one;' and my heart was lighter and my pocket heavier than I had ever known either before.

The next morning, very early, my father took me home, and at night we went again. He was now kinder to me in his manner, though I was not permitted to keep the money I nightly received in the way of presents; and I never had the doll. I cannot tell how long I continued to sing at the tavern. The first night seems burnt into my memory, with its hopes and fears, griefs and pleasures; but of the succeeding evenings my recollection is very imperfect. They seem all blended confusedly together; but I imagine, from the seasons of the year, that I must have been in the regular habit of going there for at least six months, when an event occurred that changed the whole course of my life.

It was summer-time. I was at home in the middle of the day, when Mr Grimaldi, whom I had never seen since the first time he came, entered the room abruptly, and sat down beside me.

'Little Alice,' said he, and his kind face was pale and troubled, 'you must put your bonnet on and come out with me.'

I timidly said that I dared not, for I had to go out with my father at night.

'Ah, yes—I know—poor child, poor child,' he muttered; 'what a life—what degradation!—But, indeed, you must come, Alice,' he continued; 'I am going to take you to my house, and we have no time to lose.' I longed to go with him; but I was afraid my father would be angry.

'No, Alice,' he replied very gravely, and kissing my forehead, 'your father will not be angry, my child.'

So I went. There was a chaise at the door into which he lifted me, and then drove rapidly away. As we turned the corner of the street, I saw a crowd coming along, surrounding four watchmen, who were carrying what seemed to me to be a sleeping man upon a narrow board; but Mr Grimaldi laid his hand suddenly over my eyes, and I felt the hand tremble. When he removed it we were in another street, and the crowd had disappeared. I asked him why he did so; but he made no reply. We then went along through many streets and roads, out into the country, among green fields, and lanes, and cottages, to a pretty house, where a lady came out and welcomed us. She seemed surprised at seeing me, but her husband whispered in her ear, and then she kissed me too, and took me into the garden, and seemed very kind, but very sorry for me; and that I could not understand. I was very happy indeed, and delighted with everything I saw; but every moment I dreaded to hear my father's angry voice inquiring for me, and this fear damped all my enjoyment.

But I never heard that voice in praise or blame again. My father was not angry with me for going away with Mr Grimaldi into the green fields, for he was dead, and that was his body I had seen borne along the streets, on its way home from the theatre, where he had expired.

### III.

Although my father had never shewn me affection, I was as much grieved at hearing of my loss as any child can be that does not understand the meaning of that strange word—death. But Mr and Mrs Grimaldi were such kind and gentle friends, that I fear I soon forgot him. At first, too, I am ashamed to say, I regretted the nightly excitement of the tavern—the cakes, the presents, the applause.

Mrs Grimaldi was the first to discover how utterly ignorant I was; and I often heard her speaking with her husband on the subject. One day when he came home after a morning rehearsal at Drury Lane, he called me to him, and taking me upon his knee, said: 'Little Alice, you are going to school.'

'Away from here!' I cried in terror, for I was perfectly happy now, and never wished to leave my adopted home.



'Yes, Alice,' said he kindly; 'a long way from here. Don't cry, my darling; people must learn to read and write; and I have been speaking about you at the theatre among your poor father's old friends, and they have all offered to pay for your going to a beautiful school, where music is taught, and where you will learn to make good use of that pretty voice of yours, little Alice. Don't cry, Alice'—for I was sobbing as if my heart would break. 'You will be very happy, Alice, for there are many learners in this school, all of whom will be players and singers by and by; and so will you; and it is in a beautiful country called Germany.'

'But can't I come and see you every Sunday, Mr Grimaldi?' said I, clasping my arms about his neck, and weeping still. My friend laughed, and told me that it was impossible, for Germany was a great way off across the sea; and then he told me about the vineyards and castles, and the river Rhine; and soon made me forget my grief at the prospect of departure.

However, when the time came that I must go, I was almost distracted with sorrow. I was taken in a coach from Finchley, where Mr Grimaldi lived, back to London, and through some dirty streets to a dark gloomy wharf, where was a trading-vessel, with its busy sailors, bales of goods, and thronging porters crowding all the deck. My kind friend put me on board, kissed me a great many times, and with tears in his eyes bade me farewell.

I was very unhappy; and when we set sail, very ill. I remember lying in my berth, and crying for grief and sickness through many days and nights. At length the motion of the ship grew less uneasy, and one morning, when I awoke, the vessel was quite still. We had arrived at Rotterdam.

There was a great noise on board, for the vessel was unloading; and when I ventured up on deck, the captain told me rather gruffly that I had better keep down in the cabin till he could take me on shore. Once a gentleman, with an account-book in his hand and a pen behind his ear, came down and asked me what I was doing there, and if I were not going to my friends on shore. And I cried, and said I did not know. So he looked at the direction on my box.

'Schwartzenfelden!' he exclaimed; 'why, that is a long way from here, little traveller. Who is to take care of you across the country?' But I could only say I did not know; so he shrugged his shoulders, and walked away again.

By and by the captain came down for me, and we went across a plank on a large quay, where there were a great many people, and more bales of goods, and sailors, and warehouses, and cranes, and high houses, and a city with steeples, and a river, and ships, and a confusion of voices all speaking a strange tongue, so that I was quite frightened, and clung to the captain's hand. Then he took me to a tavern, where we dined, with a number of other people, at a long table; and he told me it was a table d'hôte; but I did not know what that meant, unless it had something to do

with the dinner, where we had jam with our meat and vegetables, and thin soup and sour cabbages, none of which I could like at all.

After this we went to a coach-office, where he paid some money for me; and then into a yard, where a great unwieldy vehicle was standing, and horses were being harnessed to it. There the captain gave me a ticket, which he said secured my place all the way; a paper in a little case, which he told me was my passport; a purse with some money; and a bag of sweet biscuits. Then he put me into a comfortable corner inside the coach, and shaking my hand very kindly, bade me good-by, and went away.

Now I was more lonely than ever. It was getting evening; two or three other passengers took their places inside, but not one spoke a word of English; the hostlers and postboy shouted; the horses made a great clattering, and away we went. I soon fell asleep, waking only now and then to find that it was dark night, and that all my companions were asleep likewise. The next morning we got out at a dirty inn, in a dirty village, and had breakfast. Then we went on again for weary, weary miles, over a flat dull country with canals and windmills, and great herds of cattle, over and over again. So with the same routine we travelled for some days; when one morning we all had to shew our passports, and allow our boxes to be opened by a company of soldiers. I afterwards knew that we then passed the frontier, and went into Germany; but at the time I could not tell what it all meant, and discerned no difference in the strange language.

The scenery from that period became more beautiful, and for the first time I beheld mountains, vineyards, and waterfalls. But the perpetual travelling by night and day wearied me so much, that at last I scarcely heeded where we went. After passing through many towns and cities, we came one evening to a pretty town with churches and white buildings, at the foot of a steep acclivity; and here they made me understand that I was to alight, for I was at Schwartzenfelden.

I was put down at a large hotel, my box was deposited by my side, the coach rolled away through the narrow streets, and I was left alone. Presently a waiter came out and spoke to me; but finding that I could not reply, he examined my boxes, and seeing my name and the subjoined address, smiled and nodded, and led me into the house. In the entrance-hall I found a man in a kind of livery, who took my box in one hand and me by the other, and so went out and along the streets. We stopped soon before a high wall, where there was a large wooden gate, or rather, two folding doors, with two enormous knockers. This was opened to us by a second man in the same livery, and I found myself in a square courtyard, leading to a large white mansion. I was shewn into a spacious parlour, where an elderly lady and eight young girls were sitting at needle-work. The lady rose and took my hand between both of hers. 'And so you are our little new friend, Alice Hoffmann, my dear?' she said in good English,

though with a foreign accent: 'welcome to your new home. Try to like it and be happy, and we shall all love you.' And then the lady kissed me on both cheeks, and led me up stairs to a room like a long gallery, with a row of ten little bedsteads, with clean white draperies and coverlids. Here, she said, the eight young girls whom I had seen slept at night; and my bed was the last one next the window. She then helped me to change my dusty travelling-clothes, and took me back to the sitting-room, where we supped.

When the meal was over, the youngest of the party read prayers aloud in German, and the lady handed me a book: 'There is an English psalm-book for you, my child,' she said kindly, and I blushed and trembled, for I could not read, and I was ashamed to say so. I saw her glance keenly at me, and then at the book, and I felt that she had guessed my secret, but she said nothing. When we rose from our knees, she kissed us all upon both cheeks, and we went to bed. There was only one in the room who could speak a little English, and this young girl occupied the bed next to mine. She told me that the eldest scholars slept in this dormitory, but that I was placed with them because I was a foreigner, as it was feared that I might be teased by others of my own age, who could not understand a word of my language. She told me, also, that the academy held twenty boys and twenty girls; that pupils came from the most distant parts of Germany, so high was the musical reputation of the school; that our matron's name—the lady whom I had seen—was Madame Kloss; that we lived in the dominions of the Grand Duke Leopold of Schwarzenfelden; and—and—a great deal more, but I fell asleep.

## IV.

It would be superfluous to dwell very minutely on those years of education, school pleasures, and school griefs, that, like a bridge, unite child-life to womanhood. The sketch of a day, of a week, would suffice for the picture of years. Time passed gently on; and amid the same round of occupations, the same friends, the same teachers, and, with few exceptions, the same schoolfellows, I grew in age and knowledge till the lapse of ten happy years found me in the first bloom of youth, hope, and ambition. My voice, from the first, had been highly esteemed by Herr Schnieder, our singing-master. Ten years of skilful tuition had developed it into a soprano of such sweetness, flexibility, and compass as, it was said, had never before been heard within the walls of the academy.

Nor, though the education afforded by the academy was expressly musical, were the more plain and not less necessary branches of knowledge neglected. French, English, and Italian were taught in the best manner; together with writing, arithmetic, and geography. On Sundays, we all went hand in hand, and two by two, to the neighbouring church, and with our youthful voices

swelled the solemn hymns and sweet responses. In the evening, we read aloud by turns from the Bible, or perhaps some pious discourse translated from Isaac Milner, and sometimes a few pages from Klopstock's *Messiah*. On Wednesdays, we had a half-holiday, when we made little excursions to the forest or the river-side; and at night we had cream-cake for supper.

Such was the school when I entered it—a lonely, ignorant, fatherless child, sent out by the bounty of strangers. Such was it at the time when I resume my narrative, when I was perhaps seventeen or eighteen years of age. I had heard at long intervals during this period from my kind friend and patron, Mr Grimaldi, and always with the same unwearied kindness and paternal solicitude. His letters, coming seldom, told of many changes—of domestic sorrow, of sickness, of a checkered and a fatiguing life. At last they ceased altogether; and after a time I heard that he was dead. I grieved much for him, and often. To this day, I think of him with love and gratitude. So ended all my connection, for life, with the country of my birth.

Herr Stolberg was the first musician of our quarter of Germany. He held the appointment of chapel-master to the Grand Duke, examined the classes of the academy in harmony every month, and we were all in great awe of his celebrity, his red ribbon, his quick black eyes, his harsh voice, and his impatient temper. His compositions were singularly affecting; as a contrapuntist, he was, perhaps, not excelled even by the greatest masters; he had studied under Beethoven, won the golden medal at the Strasbourg Festival, and had lately produced an oratorio on the anniversary of the Grand Duke's wedding-day.

I was sitting one morning in the class with some of my elder schoolfellows, when the door opened suddenly, and Herr Stolberg walked in, accompanied by Madame Kloss. He laid his hat on a table, and drew a paper from his pocket. 'Ladies,' he said in his quick, decisive tone, 'I have the honour to inform you that, in consequence of the departure of Mademoiselle Uhden for Berlin, there will shortly be a vacancy for a first soprano in the choir of the Chapel Royal. It is the gracious pleasure of His Highness the Grand Duke to select a lady from this academy to fill the situation; and I am therefore directed to announce to you, that as many as desire to compete will be heard on this day week in the music-room of the institution. A selection from the *Messiah* of Handel and the *Creation* of Haydn has been appointed for each candidate to sing; and His Highness will attend in person at your performance'—and Herr Stolberg laid the list of music on the desk of Madame Kloss, bowed once more all around, and left the room as abruptly as he had entered it.

I need not say what an excitement raged among the sopranis of the Schwartzenfelden Academy Royal of Music, during the week that succeeded this announcement. Many of the girls said that it was useless to compete with me, since I had the finest voice there.

But they practised, nevertheless; and nothing was heard from morning till night but the selections from Haydn and Handel. For my part, I scarcely sang a note. I felt that rest and thought would aid me better in that moment, which I knew was the most eventful of my life.

The week passed by, and the day of trial came. In the morning, I went out and wandered by myself in the pathways of the wood that lay beyond the town. Here all was so still—so holy: Confidence and peace passed suddenly into my breast. I wept. I could have sung then, and sung as I had for days but faintly pictured to myself. But I would not break the enchanted silence of the place. I hastened back to the academy, and remained in the library alone till I was summoned to dress for the evening. There were five competitors besides myself. Three sang very well, and the other two indifferently. The best was a young girl named Rebecca Leo. Her father was a Jewish merchant and money-lender in the town, and was reported to be wealthy. Rebecca was not so happy in the school as most of us, for I regret to say that many of the pupils avoided the Jewess, whose father they called *Der Wucherer*. We had often done each other little kindnesses. She was lonely. I pitied her, and she was grateful for my attention.

At six o'clock we were in the music hall. Herr Stolberg sat at the piano; the students occupied benches at the extremity of the room; Madame Kloss and the teachers were ranged along one side of the platform, and we, the performers, at the other. At a quarter past six the Grand Duke entered with his suite—the list of our names was placed before him, and we began. My name was the fourth in succession, so I had some little time to wait. The first candidate began—I strove in vain to recall the feelings of the morning—I felt my breath flutter and my whole frame trembling. I tried to read the words, in the vain effort to abstract my thoughts to their exalted sense. Alas! the letters swam before my eyes, and it was with difficulty I could restrain my tears. A gentle hand was laid upon my arm: 'It is your turn, Alice,' said Rebecca.

I rose and crossed to the piano—the Grand Duke looked up and scrutinised me attentively—I thought I should have fallen, and laid my hand upon the instrument for support; a hand was laid upon it and instantly withdrawn. I turned involuntarily, and saw Herr Stolberg gazing at me with an unwonted cordiality in his dark eyes. He pretended to be arranging some music near where my hand was laid.

'Fear nothing, Fräulein Alice,' he muttered in a low voice; 'you alone are capable of the part.'

This strange encouragement from the formidable *maestro* almost took away my breath with surprise; in a moment he had commenced the symphony, and I began. I was so terrified that I know not how I sang the opening bars; indeed, I have no

recollection of singing them at all. I was in a whirlwind—concert-room, Grand Duke, music, all vanished from before my eyes. After a few moments, I seemed to hear the silver notes of my own voice rising above the accompaniment, like a bird from the forest—as if it were some other person, and I were listening to them. Gradually this sensation left me; I fancied myself once more in the still wood, the sense and majesty of the words seemed again unfolded to me, and the full tide of deep religious enthusiasm rushed over my soul, and poured itself forth in the superhuman gladness of that inspired song in which the people of Zion are bidden to ‘rejoice greatly!’

When I had concluded, and resumed my seat, my heart was beating, it is true, but no longer with apprehension. The other five looked from me to one another, the eyes of Madame Kloss were full of tears, and a burst of half-uttered bravos proceeded from the end of the hall where the male students were seated.

‘Was I not right, Fräulein Alice?’ said Herr Stolberg, as he came over to me, after speaking for a moment with the Grand Duke. ‘Take my arm, that I may introduce you to his Highness. He says it is unnecessary for the two other candidates to sing, for he has selected you.’

## V.

With the appointment of first soprano to the Chapel Royal, I also received that of sub-professor of singing to the academy, and was next in authority to my former master, Herr Schnieder. I was, consequently, removed from the pupils’ dormitory, and allowed a separate bed-chamber with a sitting-room attached. In the latter, a small piano was placed for my accommodation, and that of any private pupils whom I might obtain, and whom I was henceforth permitted, by the laws of the academy, to instruct. I had five or six before three weeks had elapsed. This unusual good-fortune was the result of my chapel situation; for, on the departure of Mademoiselle Uhden, three families, where she had been a teacher of singing, had instantly transferred their patronage to me, as her successor.

Life was now all happiness, and fate seemed smiling upon me. His Highness repeatedly honoured me with his approbation, and the Grand Duchess frequently sent for me when the evening-service was concluded, to sing her favourite *morceaux* from the oratorios of Handel, and the masses of Mozart. They were a most unassuming and domestic couple—dignified, it is true, but glad to lay aside the ceremonies of royalty, and in private, to place everybody around them at ease, and even ready themselves to take a part in a glee or a motett. At last, it became the rule for me to attend in the drawing-room every Sunday evening; and as Herr Stolberg was likewise invited, we went together. Thus we came to be—I had almost said friends, but that is not

the word; for though the great *maestro* was, in his abrupt way, kind and even familiar, I could never forget his fame, his superior position, and the authority of his appointment in the palace. Besides, he was forty years of age, and to a girl of seventeen that appears no inconsiderable seniority. But there is another person whom I have hitherto delayed to name. I would break off even now, rather than—— But it is useless, and I can avoid it no longer.

The Baron von Bachhoffen, master of the horse to his Highness the Grand Duke, was the youngest nobleman in the little band who composed the royal suite. I never sang in the chapel, but I saw him there; my attendance was never commanded at the palace, but he was there also. The families where I taught were of the first importance in the state, and frequently invited to the royal circle: I seldom went to their houses, but I encountered him either going or coming; and sometimes he would visit them when he knew that I was giving the lesson. It would be useless for me to deny that these silent attentions dwelt more upon my mind than I would then confess even to myself. I tried not to think of them; I left myself no idle moments—I read, practised, conversed more than ever with my young friends in the academy, and fancied I succeeded. The baron was very young—not yet of age. His face was the most beautiful I have ever beheld, and I have seen many since that time. It was fair, boyishly fair, and his clear blue eyes wore an expression of tenderness, that sank strangely into my heart. Besides, he was the most accomplished gentleman of the court—the best rider, the finest shot, the most graceful dancer in the minuet, the readiest wit, the sweetest singer. It is no wonder that he should win the heart of an obscure foreigner, whose only recommendations were her youth, her innocence, and her voice.

At the palace, it was found that his voice harmonised deliciously with mine; and when but a few were present, and the evening was very private, his Highness used to express a wish, which was interpreted as a command, that the baron would sing a duet from the *Creation*, or the *Mount of Olives*, with Mademoiselle Hoffmann.

O the bright, bright dream of my youth! One day he took my hand in his and kissed it, as we stood in a recess half hidden by a curtain, looking over some music in an anteroom at the palace. I felt that kiss upon my hand for days; and that night his face and voice were with me in my dreams.

The time came at last when I found it was of no avail to endeavour to banish him from my thoughts; I might as well have tried to separate the daylight from the day. His looks, his gentle acts of tenderness and devotion, his low voice, all told me that he loved me; and, once assured of this unspoken attachment, I gave up my whole heart without reserve to the fascinations of first love. First love! it is but a word; but O what a world of meaning it contains for the heart! To me there seemed a double life

and beauty in every created thing. I drank in joy from every sight and sound—the spring-flowers wore a brighter hue, and exhaled a sweeter perfume; the morning air breathed a thousand scents and sounds unknown before; the songs of the birds spoke a new language to my ears! I used to sit and think for hours on the last words he had whispered, on the last pressure of his hand. I would close my eyes, and strive to recall every feature of his beloved face. Life was a dream—and dreams in which he was present were dearer still than life.

About this time, Herr Stolberg's manner became sensibly altered to me: he was not less friendly, but he was more polite. An appearance of constraint was evident in his looks, in his manner, in the very tones of his voice. I thought of it frequently for hours, and taxed my memory for some grounds of displeasure, but I could discover nothing. Once or twice I had fancied that he looked upon me with an expression almost of pity in his eyes, and one morning I could have believed that they were full of tears. I would have given the world that I could have said to him: 'Friend, how have I angered you?' but his perfectly cool and polite manner would not admit of this question.

The Grand Duke's birthday came round, and a festival and concert were held at the palace in the evening. I was engaged with one or two others from the choir of the chapel, and the pupils of the academy attended to sing the choruses. The concert-room opened into the grounds by a beautiful marble terrace, and a broad flight of steps. Sitting on the platform, and surrounded by instruments and voices, I turned my eyes often and wearily towards the garden beyond, and longed to escape amid its quiet alleys. A long cantata, composed by the Grand Duke, and listened to with courteous attention by his guests, constituted the musical entertainment of the evening. It was dull and uninteresting; and by the time the last notes of the royal composition had died away, I was thankful to retreat to an inner room till the audience had dispersed. When all were gone to the ball-room at the other side of the palace, I wrapt a shawl around me, and stole out into the dark night.

It was autumn, when leaves were golden on the trees, and a warm odorous breeze filled the still night with beauty. The moon and stars shone brightly overhead, the air fanned my burning cheeks, and I took a shady turning amid the trees, and wandered slowly on. That night the gardens were like a fairy scene; lines of many-coloured lamps hung like fruit upon the branches of the acacias, which, formed into long alleys, seemed to stretch away far into the dim distance. I went dreamily forward; the strange calm and beauty of the place lulled me into a reverie, and I heard not the step that came behind me down the pathway.

'A lovely night,' said the dearest voice in all the world, close at my side—'a night for poetry and love.' I felt the hot blood fly to my face and then retreat again. I knew that I became



very pale, but he could not see it; I trembled, but he should not know it.

'A lovely night, indeed, your excellency,' I said as firmly as I could. He heard the tremor I struggled to conceal.

'You are ill, mademoiselle?'

'I thank your excellency. I am well.'

'I have been seeking you, mademoiselle,' he said in a low earnest voice—'I have been seeking you all through the palace and gardens; I wished to speak with you. I have looked forward to this night for many weeks in the hope of doing so.' He paused, but I remained quite silent. I could hear the throbbings of my own heart in the stillness; but he heard it not, and he continued: 'I would say three words, mademoiselle, that must long since have been written too plainly on my face—have mingled too audibly in the tones of my voice—have spoken too visibly in my every action to need a more distinct avowal. Here—here let me speak them—here, amid darkness and silence—here, amid the whispering trees, beneath the everlasting sky—here, before God and the stars! I risk my peace, my future, my happiness, my all, and say—I adore you!'

Again he paused for a moment. He approached nearer to me; his voice, which had been soft and low, became quick and passionate: 'Alice, I have spoken—but not all. One question remains to be asked—my life hangs on your answer. Will you be mine? . . . . Not a word?—not a token? Speak to me, dearest, speak!' I could not speak; but his arm was round me, and his burning kisses were on my lips.

'Answer me—answer me!' I withdrew myself from his arms, I took his hand between both of mine, bowed down, and kissed it.

It was all my answer, but he understood it.

## VI.

He was my sovereign—my king! My love for him was almost a religion. He was so high above me in his rank, his noble blood, his youthful beauty! Sometimes it seemed to me that such happiness and honour could not be true. I feared that all was but a dream, and shuddered to awake. My love became an idolatry. He gave me his portrait, and I knelt praying with it in my hands. I would not have changed life then for paradise. I lived, thought, dreamt, and prayed for him—him only. Could I have forgotten God in so worshipping His creature, and was I chastised for it?

It was soon known throughout the town that the Fräulein Hoffmann, who sang in the chapel, was betrothed to the young Baron Theodore von Bachhoffen, master of the horse to his Highness the Grand Duke Leopold. In the academy there was a great excitement. Madame Kloss was as proud and happy as

though she had been my mother; the pupils brought me flowers, gifts, and copies of verses; the masters offered me their formal congratulations. Herr Stolberg alone was silent. He seemed as if he neither saw nor heard anything of the event. When Madame Kloss, one morning, thinking that he must yet be in ignorance, told him in a half-audible voice of the betrothal of her dear Alice, he replied drily, that he was already aware of the circumstance, and turned away. I will not deny that I felt grieved and slighted; but I was too happy to be otherwise than transiently affected by any circumstance of outer life.

Thus it went on, and the winter season arrived. He would be of age in the early spring, and our marriage was appointed for the day of his majority.

During this interval, I received one morning a short and formal note from Herr Stolberg, requesting leave to wait upon me immediately. He followed my permission in a few moments; and as he entered my little parlour, I observed that he looked pale, and that he held a letter in his hand. I rose and placed a seat for him; but he muttered a few unintelligible words, placed the letter open before me, and began pacing nervously up and down the room.

It was written in French, and purported to be from one of his oldest friends, now the manager of the Italian Opera in Paris. He was in need of a first soprano—a prima donna—to commence the season till the arrival of Madame Malibran from London. Herr Stolberg had mentioned my singing in his letters; he felt that he could rely on his friend's judgment; he requested him to communicate with me; and he offered to pay me 8000 francs for the season.

The characters swam before my eyes; I could scarce believe in so much good-fortune; I read the letter, and laid it down again several times before I could speak a word.

'Does the Fräulein Hoffmann accept or refuse?' asked the chapel-master, stopping suddenly in his walk, and standing before me.

'I accept!—accept most gladly—if—if'—The thought that Theodore might object to my appearance on the stage rushed suddenly over my mind; a strange feeling of reluctance to speak his name made me hesitate and blush. Herr Stolberg turned very pale, and made a movement with his hand for me to continue.

'I must have a day to consider,' I said falteringly.

'Yet, one moment since you were decided!'

'True; but—but'—I felt it must be said; so turning partly aside—'I must consult other wishes than my own,' I replied; 'I must mention it to'—

'To the Baron von Bachhoffen!' exclaimed the chapel-master in a hoarse voice. 'O Fräulein Alice, you have this day called me your friend. If you believe in my friendship, if you would requite it, do not, I entreat of you, mention the letter to the

baron till after nine o'clock this night. It is the first favour I have asked of you; I implore you to grant it!

His voice was agitated, and his utterance rapid; he seized one of my hands between both of his own, and crushed it in an iron grasp that almost betrayed me into an expression of pain; his black eyes shone with a wild light into mine, and he trembled visibly. I was frightened, and almost weeping at his strange vehemence.

'Promise me Fräulein—promise me!'

His look was so beseeching, and so earnest, that I said: 'Well, I promise; but only till after nine o'clock to-night.'

'Be here in readiness to receive me,' said the chapel-master in the same hurried tone, but lower, as if he feared to be overheard—'be here at six or seven o'clock. I will then call upon you again. I must find you alone, and you must suffer yourself to be guided by me: place yourself in my hands for a single hour. Speak no word of this or of the letter till the time promised. Be silent. Farewell!'

I bowed my head in assent. In an instant he was gone. The day dragged heavily on, and every hour seemed longer than the last. It rained, and the rain was mingled with snow. At six I repaired to my own apartments, to receive him when he should arrive. I tried to read; but it was in vain. I could only pace the room, and look out from the blurred windows on the dark wet gardens, and listen to the sweeping wind and rain. A sensation of vague terror crept over me; and when the town clocks chimed the hour, I listened to their harsh tongues as they had been the tongues of fate. Another dreary half-hour crept away; I heard the bell rung, and the courtyard gate half opened—a familiar voice spoke my name—a quick foot sounded on the stairs.

'I am late, Fräulein Alice,' said the chapel-master, as he entered hastily and closed the door behind him; 'and there is no time to be lost. You must go out with me for an hour.' He was pale, very pale; the snow and rain were trickling from his cloak upon the floor, and his black locks hung in wet masses upon his sallow cheeks.

I wrapt a heavy shawl round me, and drew a close bonnet and veil over my face. 'I am ready,' I said.

We went down the stairs, and passed the door of Madame Kloss's room. 'Shall I not tell madame?' I asked, as we went by. He shook his head, hurried me on across the wet courtyard, and through the gates into the street. The porter stared inquisitively, and touched his hat as we passed by.

Although it was so early, none were stirring in the streets save a few soldiers and market-women. The churches looked tall and dim, and the thick rain came steadily down. Through many dark by-ways and narrow turnings we went. The chapel-master walked fast, unheeding the pools of water that lay upon the path. My feet were cold and wet through; I thought of the night when I had so gone through the streets of London—a night as

inclement as this. I almost fancied I was acting it again, and under the same circumstances, when we stopped before a low door, with a fantastically carved overhanging porch. The house was small, not a light was visible from any of the windows; three gloomy trees, stripped of their foliage, swung their arms mournfully before the door; and a dog began barking furiously within. Herr Stolberg knocked gently with his hand upon the window; there was a sound of chains and bolts, the door opened slowly, and a female form stood in the entrance. She took me by the hand, and led me along the passage, while Herr Stolberg, who seemed to know the way, followed softly behind. It was profoundly dark; she guided us to what seemed a room, and saying that she would bring a light, went out and closed the door. I shook convulsively from head to foot.

'Fear nothing, Fräulein Alice,' said my friend, taking my hand gently in his own—'Heavens! you are ill!'

'I am cold, nothing more,' I replied faintly.

'Cold—cold and wet,' he exclaimed in a suppressed and broken voice. 'My God! You will be ill—ill, and through me!'

'Hush!' I replied; 'it is nothing. See, here comes the light.'

A bright line of radiance streamed under the door, the woman entered with a lamp in her hand: it was Rebecca Leo! She placed her finger on her lips to stay the exclamation that was rising to mine, and pressing my cold cheek to hers, whispered: 'Yes; this is my father's house, Alice. Would that you had never crossed its threshold for this purpose! You must stand here, in the window. I will draw the curtains before you, and there you will hear all without the chance of discovery.'

'What does this mean?' I cried. 'What horrid secret am I to listen to? Let me go—let me go!'

'It is too late,' said Rebecca, turning suddenly away and listening earnestly; 'there is my father's ring at the door—hide, hide quickly! for my sake, Alice—for my sake!'—and she half led, half dragged me into the recess.

Herr Stolberg came and stood beside me, and Rebecca drew the heavy folds, so that they fell from ceiling to floor, and shrouded us utterly from sight.

'Stay there; move not, breathe not,' she said, as she turned to go. 'God help you, my poor Alice!'

The kiss she gave me covered my lips and cheek with tears. Rebecca weeping, and for me! I pressed my hands rigidly upon my breast, and stood still waiting, as if for death. My companion spoke no word, and for some minutes I heard but the sound of his breathing. Then the opening and shutting of distant doors, the tread of feet along the hall, and the sound of a low querulous voice, as the persons entered the room in which we were concealed.

'More money—more money! always money!' said the voice, with a Jewish accent and an impatient sigh. There was a

rustling of papers on the table, and a sound like turning the leaves of a book. 'I cannot do it, excellency—I cannot do it. The estates will not bear another groschen. They are mortgaged to their full value, excellency. It cannot be.'

'Der Teufel! I must have it, Leo,' said another voice in reply.

O that voice, that voice! And had I come hither for this! I shrunk back into the recess, and felt the paternal arm of my friend pass round me in support.

'You must go to some one else, excellency, for your money,' said the Jew. 'I am a poor man, and I cannot give.'

'Give! did a Jew ever give?' said the other. 'No, friend Leo, I ask no gifts—the gentleman does not beg from the money-lender. I must have further loans. I want a thousand florins.'

O the harsh, cold, mocking voice! How unlike the gentle tones of love I had been used to hear from those dear lips!

'A thousand florins, excellency!' cried the usurer. 'Mein Gott! your estates are not worth a thousand kreutzers.'

'I don't ask it on my estates; I offer better security.'

'Security! good—good!' said the Jew eagerly. 'On what security, excellency?'

'Listen, my very kind and respectable friend Isaac, and I will satisfy the delicate scruples of thy coffers, for conscience thou hast none. I am going to be married in the spring.'

'I know it—I know it, and to a penniless singer, excellency.'

'Precisely so, friend Isaac. To a penniless singer, who will be to me one of the greatest fortunes in Germany.'

'Hein!' exclaimed the Jew, drawing a long breath between his teeth.

'Art thou aware, my friend, that this girl has the finest voice in Germany?—that she will create a madness, a furor?—that she will be worth, at the very least, a hundred thousand florins a year to me, her husband and your debtor?'

'And is this your security, excellency?'

'Truly it is: can you wish a better?'

'Bah! it is a folly. The girl may fail, may change her mind, and refuse you. I cannot lend my florins upon the phantom of a security.'

'But I tell you she loves me, as only girls and women love, friend Isaac. She would die—toil—lose her very soul for me. She is entirely mine. Your money is as safe as though it were in your own strong-boxes. Name your own rate of interest, and take my bond at once. Money I must and will have. Without it, I cannot even marry suitably, and the stake is worth the trust. Come, Isaac—a thousand florins at two hundred per cent., to be paid in six months! Can you refuse?'

'A thousand florins! it is a great deal, excellency.'

'I have not ten left to keep me from now till then. The cards and colours have been against me lately. It is fate. Die Hölle, Isaac, you must give it to me!'

'But you will be here again, excellency, before a week is past. The gaming-table will swallow every stiver. I dare not lend.'

The answer was low and indistinct; the Jew seemed still to remonstrate, Theodore to asseverate and entreat. Then there was the rustling of more papers, the quick scratching of a pen, the ring of gold——

'Friend Isaac, thou art a treasure of a money-lender,' said the mocking voice and the cruel laugh—'a very demigod to a lover in distress. Cupid himself smiles on thee for this.'

'You a lover, excellency!' said the Jew with a short hard cough. 'The lady of *your* affections must have charms indeed! I have heard of her from one who knows her, else I should not have trusted your version of her talents. She is pretty, I am told.'

'I do not come here to talk of beauty and fair dames, friend Isaac,' laughed the creditor, chinking some coins together in his hand. 'She is young, credulous, and clever—that is enough for our purpose. Pretty!—know'st thou the complexion of my mistress, Isaac?'

'Not I; excellency!'

'Red and black, friend Jew—*rouge et noir*! Good-night! ha, ha! good-night!'

Their steps died away along the passage; doors shut and opened again; the room was left in darkness; and all was still. I did not weep; I did not speak; I did not die. My hands were locked and cold; my lips were stony; my brain burned. I stood still—still and speechless. The world seemed crumbling away beneath my feet. Life—death—love! what were they all but words? I felt my hands grasped, and my brow kissed twice or thrice; I heard an anguished voice cry: 'Alice, Alice, my friend, my sister, look up—speak—weep! Do not stand thus; it drives me mad!' I heard it; but it fell dully on my ear, and woke no echo in my soul. Then there came a light; a withdrawal of the curtains; a woman's gentle voice, that sobbed forth sweet consoling words; a woman's gentle hands, that drew me from the arms of him who held me, to a sisterly embrace. Her tears wept down upon my cheeks, and then the deadly frost all suddenly gave way: I uttered a low moan, and fell in an agony of despair upon the floor.

How long I continued thus, or how I was removed, I know not; but I suppose I must have fainted, for my next consciousness found me again in the academy, with Madame Kloss and Rebecca bathing my hands and brow, and with Herr Stolberg bending earnestly above me. For some time I could not recall the dreadful past, but when I did, that memory was mercifully accompanied by tears. They were so good to me, so gentle! For hours and hours they never left my side, and it was nearly day-dawn before they thought me calm enough to be left alone. I felt as if all were night—past, present, future. Nothing around me, nothing before me but darkness; darkness unlighted by a single star.

And through all this there reigned one feverish desire, which

gained every moment in intensity—a restless craving to escape from the scene of my wo, from the face of the traitor! A longing to be far, far away from—oh, not my misery! but the place where its cross was inflicted upon me. Away! away! from the scenes of my youth and my false happiness. What was that youth now to me? what that brief sunshine? I was deceived, broken-hearted, sold! I had taken him for an angel; I had set him as a saint upon the altar of my inner world, and blindly worshipped him! And now—what was left me but to die?

I was sitting, fixed and tearless, as these thoughts formed themselves in my mind; my eyes fell upon a folded paper on the table. Ha! the letter—the letter from Paris! My resolution was taken in an instant: a fresh energy, the energy of despair, came to my assistance. ‘I will go,’ said I firmly. I took pen and paper calmly from my desk, and wrote to Herr Stolberg, acquainting him with my resolution; sent for Madame Kloss, and told her what I had done; wrote a formal resignation of my appointment in the ducal chapel, and went to my bed-chamber and commenced packing.

‘When wilt thou depart, my child?’ asked Madame Kloss tenderly.

‘To-night, madame, when the diligence passes through the town.’

## VII.

Alone, alone upon the road! Night and darkness around. No moon, no stars. Rain—driving, pitiless rain, streaming down the narrow windows of the coach, and dimming the pale light of the lamps outside. Not a sound save the howling wintry wind among the woods, the hoarse shouts of the postilions, the creaking vehicle, the heavy wheels, and the monotonous trampling of the horses.

There was no passenger inside the diligence but myself; no human friendly voice to breathe one comforting word to the weeping desolate singer crouched and trembling in the corner. Herr Stolberg had seen me to the coach-office, and had ridden perhaps a mile with me on the road. But he had scarcely spoken to me all the time, and as he bade me farewell, and got out to walk back again in the dark, wet night, his voice was broken; and my hands, where he had kissed them, were wetted with his tears. True friend! true, noble, and sincere! How lightly had I estimated that heart; how little had I appreciated the deep feeling and chivalric tenderness that lay beneath that rough exterior! The voice might be harsh, but it was capable of framing tones of gentlest consolation; the eye might be stern, but it could weep for pity. When I needed him not, he had been proud and cold to me; in the day of danger, he had rescued me; in the time of trouble, he had aided and comforted me.

O fearful journey! I seem now to remember little of it, save

a long succession of weary stages ; the changes of day and night ; the arrival and departure of many passengers ; the toilsome, unresting motion ; the heavy weight of unconquerable distress. At last came the passing of frontiers, the transition from German to Dutch, from Dutch to French. Then a difference, scarcely observed by me, in the aspect of the country—towns, villages, rivers, hills, and forests ; then a city with long narrow streets, and high white houses ; soldiers, customhouse-officers, the examination of passports and luggage. I was in Paris.

The hotel was vast, and my rooms overlooked a handsome street, whence I gazed out for hours in a state of dreamy melancholy upon the throngs of vehicles, soldiers, and gaily-dressed foot-passengers, without seeing a single face, or hearing a single sound, that could claim any fellowship of old association with me. I was alone in my grief in the great city. The language was unfamiliar, though not unknown to me ; and my heart yearned again for the studious seclusion of my old home in Germany, and the sweet sounds of my adopted tongue.

The manager of the Opera House, M. Lacroix, waited upon me the day after my arrival. He was a Frenchman, but had been educated in Munich with his friend the chapel-master of Schwartzefelden : he spoke German fluently. It was so pleasant to me to hear him utter it ! He was grave, polite, and even friendly. He did not remain long, for he could see that I was suffering ; and attributing it to the fatigue of my long journey, withdrew very shortly, after having arranged with me to visit the theatre on the morrow for the first rehearsal.

It went off favourably. The novelty and excitement of the scene revived me for a time. I returned to my hotel, and applied myself earnestly to the study of my part. Thus a fortnight passed away. We had daily rehearsals ; my time and my mind were occupied, my former ambition was aroused, the heavy weight still lay upon my heart, but its sting was not so sharp. I could think of Theodore now with pity, and with less despair. I grew daily paler and thinner ; but by degrees I found that I entered more immediately into the events and scenes around me. The night of performance was at length announced, and my name appeared in the bills and daily journals as the new prima donna. The opera was *Gustavus*.

When the day came, I was strangely excited ; not with grief, not with terror, but with a kind of wild delight that was half misery. I felt within myself a strong foreboding of success ; I longed to win fame and riches, not for myself, ah, no ! but that Theodore might hear of my triumph, might lament the heart he had lost, might blush for his own baseness ! As the hour of performance neared, my emotions became almost uncontrollable. I seemed to tread upon air ; my cheeks were flushed, my heart beat high, my pulse throbbed rapidly, my breast seemed to dilate, and my voice to strengthen within me.



'Ah, mademoiselle, you must succeed,' said the manager with a glance of delighted surprise as I entered the green-room to await my call to the stage: 'you have the air of Jeanne d'Arc going forth to conquer.' I smiled at the compliment: I conversed with those around me; I felt myself transformed into another creature, and utterly unlike the silent singer who had passed through the rehearsals in cold reserve and absent melancholy. I saw the others look from one to another with amazement, and then back again to me. I caught a glimpse of my face in a mirror as I passed, and I scarcely recognised the glowing cheeks, the flashing eyes, the haughty carriage and triumphant lip for my own countenance.

The first act passed away with moderate applause. Rubini, as Gustavus, was received cordially; but the audience was quiet, and the whole of this act is somewhat uninteresting. There was a pause; the second act commenced; and it was now my turn to appear as Amelia, the wife of the courtier Ankastrom, who seeks the abode of the prophetess to purchase from her a philter which may quench her unhappy attachment for Gustavus.

'Mademoiselle is called,' said M. Lecroix.

I went. I had no sooner appeared in the far gloom of the apartment, than a burst of applause seemed to shake the very air around me. I advanced, and bowed; it was repeated again and again, in three distinct rounds. I trembled, but I did not fear. The footlights blinded me; they seemed to interpose a curtain of light between the audience and myself—I could not see an inch beyond the stage. The stage!—it was the first time I had ever appeared there, yet I scarcely seemed to feel it strange. I breathed freely, I felt glad and strong; but I assumed the trembling tone and shrinking attitude of the high-born lady in the fortune-teller's murky den. I implored her aid; my changing countenance depicted alternating terror, love, courage, despair. The prophetess declares that I must seek that dreadful spot beyond the city-walls where stands the scaffold, and there gather a certain mystic herb. I dread, I waver, I consent. The crowd rushes in, and I fly from the scene.

There was another burst of applause, but the chorus instantly began, and my share in that act was concluded.

Another brief pause, and the curtain rose again. It was a strangely solemn scene, and marvellously painted: a black desert heath near Stockholm, treeless and houseless. Two mossy columns, united at the top by an iron bar, rise darkly in the midst of the stage; these answer the purpose of a gibbet, and the ghastly chains yet hang from them in which the criminals are suspended. I come slowly forward to seek, in that terrible solitude, the plant whose virtue is oblivion. The house was silent from a feeling of awe; and in the opening recitative, the first notes of my voice, imploring courage from Heaven, seemed to wander tremblingly round the space, and then to die away in

grief and terror. I advance, recede, advance again, and stoop to pluck the fatal leaves from the foot of the column. The distant clocks tell the hour of midnight. I cannot pluck the herb—I love! Yet, great Heaven, guide and strengthen me! I *will* gather it. I turn again, and see the king!

Then that deeply-wrought scene of doubt and passion—the struggle of honour, friendship, fidelity, and wildest love, on which the curtain falls!

Another long roar of approbation from the house; I am led forward; bouquets fall around me; the dazzling effect of the lights has worn away. I see a vast crowd of upturned faces, and many are in tears.

‘Ah, mademoiselle,’ says M. Lecroix, kissing my hand in a frenzy of delight, ‘I never knew so splendid a success.’

Then came a magnificent scene, representing the ball-room with its flowers, its myriads of variegated lamps, its vistas of gilded columns, and its crowds of dancers with their joyous voices, their rich costumes, and black velvet masks. The giddy *galop* whirled them on to its mad merriment; all was confusion, splendour, intoxication. I advanced from one side, Gustavus from the other.

But the king was closely followed by a figure in a black domino. My eyes were suddenly rivetted on this man. I had not seen him before, and yet—— He held his plumed hat in his hand, and his light curling masses of hair contrasted strongly with the sable vizor. Some strange feeling came over me; my heart stood still, my breath failed me, I felt suffocated.

It was now my part to address Gustavus. The prompter gave the word, the whole stage waited for me. I tried to shake off the feeling that bound my utterance—I compelled myself to advance. The stranger stepped suddenly to my side, and removing his mask, ‘Alice!’ he said in a suppressed stern tone, ‘I love you—I cannot live without you. Were it to the end of the world, I must follow you!’

O God! that voice—that voice again! I saw his pallid face, and wild bright eyes! The crowded stage, the glaring lights, the throng of faces in the theatre—all swam round before me. I uttered one piercing cry, and fell senseless to the ground.

## VIII.

For many days after this event, my life remains a blank. The destruction of all my hopes, the rapid journey, the false excitement, and the shock I had received upon the stage, had been too much for my physical and mental strength. I was seized with a raging fever and delirium.

After an interval that seemed to me as many months as it was days, I woke one morning, as if from sleep, and found myself in

bed. At first I had no recollection of what had passed; I fancied myself once more in Germany. I tried to rise, but I found myself without the power to move! I was alarmed; I looked round; the room was strange, and yet I had seen it before. There was a table near the bed, with some medicine phials and wine-glasses; a fire burnt in the grate, and the blinds were drawn carefully down, subduing the apartment to a pleasant darkness. I saw I had been ill. I closed my eyes, and suddenly it came again before me—the theatre, the Opera, all were remembered. Silent tears stole gently down my cheeks as I lay thinking.

By and by the door opened gently, and a woman entered. I opened my eyes; her face was young and kind, and I tried to force a smile. 'I am better,' I said in French. 'Are you my nurse?'

'Ah, thank Heaven!' she cried, 'madame is recovering! Mais il ne faut pas parler!' she continued earnestly, as she saw me about to speak. 'It is forbidden by monsieur the doctor.'

'At least tell me how long I have been ill,' I said.

'Madame has been three weeks in danger. If madame will rest tranquil till monsieur the doctor has seen her, I will tell her all I know on his departure.'

With this assurance I was forced to be content. Pierrette, for that was the name of my attendant, bathed my hands and face with tender care, and then sat knitting quietly beside me for some hours. At last I fell asleep again, lulled by the monotonous movement of her busy fingers. I woke with the entrance of some person into the chamber. It was the physician. He spoke gently and softly; said that I was now free from all danger; and, promising to call again upon the morrow, left me.

It was now evening. Pierrette lighted a small lamp, drew the curtain to shade the light from my eyes, recommenced her knitting, and began: 'And now, if madame will promise not to speak or to excite herself, I will tell her all about her illness.'

I promised earnestly, and she continued.

'Eh bien! Madame was taken ill upon the stage, after making a success altogether enormous. Madame fell, nobody knows why; and shrieked, nobody knows at what. She was ill, under the influence of fever: voilà tout. She was brought hither in a carriage, and placed in bed. Madame was delirious—her ravings were terrible. This lasted three weeks, and madame's life was nearly despaired of. To-day, madame is saved, and her friend is happy!'

'Friend!—what friend?' I asked with eagerness.

'Silence, madame—not a word! Madame's friend, the gentleman who has called three or four times every day to inquire of her health. Ah, the poor monsieur! he tried, while madame was in danger, to seem firm and strong; but to-day, when he heard the happy news, he wept as if his heart would break with joy!'

I was dumb with surprise and happiness. Could it then be that

he truly loved me after all? Pierrette glanced round, and saw the expression of silent thankfulness upon my face.

'Ah, madame,' she said archly, 'my little history will do more good than the medicines of monsieur the doctor! But it is not all: madame will not blame me very much if I acknowledge that I have once suffered the gentleman to see madame during her illness? This poor monsieur, he prayed me so wildly for one glance at the face which we all believed he might never see again! And so I brought him to the threshold of madame's chamber, and entreated him to go no further; but he was not then to be controlled: he rushed forward, and knelt beside the bed, and kissed her burning hands, and sobbed—ah, c'était affreux! But madame must not weep: I will say no more if madame excites herself!'

Could I help weeping? Ah, blessed tears, how sweet and joyful were they! Theodore, my own Theodore! I had wronged him: he might be extravagant, thoughtless; but false—— Thank Heaven! that grief was spared to me, and I felt that all the rest was forgiven. That night I slept long and dreamlessly. It was the sleep of health; and the next morning I felt calm and much stronger. Days passed pleasantly away; Pierrette was attentive and affectionate: she told me of the visits of 'that poor monsieur;' and constantly brought me flowers and books, which he had left for me at the porter's lodge. It was winter-time; yet violets and exquisite camellias were laid every morning and evening upon my dressing-table.

I recovered very slowly, and three weeks elapsed before I could leave my bedroom. One day, Pierrette came smiling into the chamber. 'There has been another gentleman this morning inquiring at the gate for the news of madame! He trusts that madame will receive him *le plus tôt que possible!*'

'What kind of appearance had the gentleman?' I asked.

'Eh bien! I did not see him; but Auguste told me that he was a fair, pale gentleman.' M. Lacroix was pale and fair; it was doubtless himself.

'I shall be well enough to-morrow, I think, Pierrette,' was my reply. 'Leave word with the concierge, that I shall be happy to receive the gentleman at two o'clock in the day.'

So it was the manager, wishing, of course, to have me resume my engagement. I was sorry to be the cause of such confusion and loss as my illness must have occasioned, and I felt desirous of resuming my duties as soon as I dare venture. I could not resist the impulse that came upon me to try my voice once more, and for the first time in six long weeks I left the sick-chamber and entered the salon. I sat down to the instrument, and played the opening symphony of a little German song that he had often loved to listen to. I tried to sing. Could it be weakness? could it be emotion? not a note came! Again I tried; again, again! Alas! it must be so! my voice, my glorious, my beautiful voice was

utterly, utterly gone! My head dropped upon my hands; I leaned forward upon the instrument, and sobbed aloud.

It was a great sorrow; but I had Theodore still; and that night I prayed for strength and comfort, and felt that what I had lost was more than compensated to me in his love.

'I have been deprived of it but a little sooner,' I argued with myself. 'Age must have brought this calamity, though more slowly. It is but a few years less—a feverish dream of fame from which I have awakened ere it reached the end—God is just and wise—His will be done!'

In the morning I felt calm, nay, almost cheerful.

'Auguste tells me, madame,' said Pierrette, 'that the fair gentleman has called again, and when he received your message, said that he should kiss your hands punctually at the time appointed.'

'And the other gentleman?' I asked, for there had been no bouquet for the last two mornings.

'The other monsieur has not called, madame, for two days. When he last called, Auguste told him that madame was greatly better, and would soon receive; but monsieur only sighed, and turned away hastily. He has not called since.'

'And he has never left either card or message?'

'Never, madame.'

This delicacy touched me more nearly than all his devotion. Poor Theodore! he feared, then, to approach me; he dared not to intrude his love, or even his repentance, upon me!

Two o'clock approached. I almost dreaded the visit of M. Lecroix, for I shrunk from telling him that my career was closed; that I had no voice to sing for him!

Pierrette came hastily in: 'He is approaching, madame—the fair monsieur who called yesterday! I see him in the courtyard.'

There were steps on the staircase—a low tap at the door—Pierrette opened it, and admitted—THEODORE!

I fell back upon the sofa from which I had partly risen. He flew to me—he covered my hands with kisses—he knelt to me—he clasped me in his arms, and breathed his passionate vows and protestations on my lips!

For some time I was passive, motionless, dumb. Surprise and disappointment seemed to overwhelm me. Not disappointment at the sight of that still beloved face; but bitter disappointment that his had not been the anxiety, the haunting visits, the eager inquiries, the tears shed at my bedside when I was near to die! Who, then, had been that one whose life so appeared to hang upon mine? 'Alas!' I said bitterly, 'then it was not thou!'

He asked my meaning, and I told him all. He had for some moments no reply to give. With downcast eye and teeth that gnawed his lip, he heard me through in silence, and then strove to stammer some faint excuses. He also had been ill—his fortunes were embarrassed, and he had been occupied in law matters—he had repeatedly inquired for me; but, doubtless, the porter had omitted

to name his visits. I looked steadily at him, and in that look the truth became plain to my eyes, and the love passed away from my heart. I doubted him, and distrust cannot dwell with love; for love is all-believing! I felt myself become steeled to him, and I resolved to put his protestations to the proof.

'And do you still love me, Theodore?' I said.

'Heaven is my witness,' he exclaimed, 'that you are dearer to me at this moment than you ever were before.'

'And you love me for myself and my heart only?'

'For thyself, for thy gentleness, for thy woman's heart!'

'And if I were poor—poor of my only advantages—if I had even no voice to recommend me—no voice wherewith to delight your ear and to earn riches for my husband?'

'Then wouldst thou be dearer still, my own love! dearer in thy privation, dearer if dependent solely on my arm.'

'It is well, Theodore,' I said very calmly, as I fixed the same unwavering glance upon him, 'for such indeed is my condition. The fever has dealt hardly with me. I have lost my voice!'

He was once more kneeling at my feet; but when I said these words, he rose, and turned deadly pale. He could not believe me; he looked at me, yet I seemed grave and in earnest. He tried to force a smile. 'You are jesting with me, my love.'

'Indeed, no,' I replied; 'my voice is irrevocably gone. I shall never sing again.'

He dropped into a chair; the very power of dissimulation seemed to leave him; his cheeks and lips became livid. I could almost have pitied his dismay, but for the scorn with which his baseness inspired me.

'I fear,' said I haughtily, 'that your excellency is disappointed.'

He started, rose, and pressing his hand to his forehead, pleaded a sudden illness, and begged permission to retire for a few moments till he should feel recovered. He advanced as if to embrace me. I drew back with undisguised contempt; but he seized my hand, touched it with his lips—and they were icy cold—bowed profoundly, and hastened from the room.

Traitor that he was! I felt too much indignation to be moved either to grief or to compassion. My pride was wounded, but my heart untouched. I sat down and wrote instantly to M. Lecroix. My letter was brief and decisive. I told him all—how my voice was gone, and my theatrical career consequently ended. I expressed my regret for his disappointment, and announced my intention of speedily quitting Paris.

I rang for Pierrette, despatched my letter to the manager, and then turning to her, 'Pierrette,' I said, 'I wish to go into the country for a few months. Will you accompany me?'

'To the country, madame? At this time of the year? Ah, the country in February is so triste!'

'Not to me. I have been used to see it, and love it in all changes of season. Will you go with me or not, Pierrette?'

'O with you, ma chère madame—with you anywhere!'

So we consulted about the best place to choose. She named many in the neighbourhood of Paris—Ville d'Avray, Asnieres, Argenteuil, St Germain; but it ended in my leaving the choice to herself, and she was to go out the next day and seek some retreat for me.

Evening came. I sat beside the fire, and formed a plan for my future life. I resolved to spend some months in the country till my health was thoroughly restored, and then to seek the situation of governess in some French or English family.

'A letter for madame,' said Pierrette, entering and disturbing my reverie.

I opened it, and read it by the firelight. Theodore's writing!—what had he to say to me? I was to be duped no longer by false

— But no—this ran in a different strain. He regretted my loss and his own poverty: he had no wish to drag me down to want; he felt that the most generous part would be to resign me. I was free—he was for ever unhappy; he wished me all forgetfulness of my devoted servant, Theodore von Bachhoffen.

Generous! generous indeed! And so this was the end—the end of that golden dream of truth and love! One tear fell on the paper: it was the last lingering weakness of my heart. I crushed the letter in my hand, and cast it into the flames. It blazed and writhed, turned to a black charred substance lighter than the very air, and fell away in dust. I looked up, and saw Pierrette still standing there, and gazing fixedly upon me. There was a curious meaning in her face. 'You are waiting to say something to me?' I asked.

'No—yes; that is—I have heard of a residence for madame.'

'Indeed!' I said, 'and where is it, Pierrette?'

'At Bellevue, madame, near Sèvres. I have a cousin there who owns a house in a charming situation—and—and it is at madame's service for as many months as she may please to reside there.'

'This is indeed delightful, Pierrette,' I said smiling; 'and when may we go there?'

'To-morrow, if madame pleases, or the next day.'

So I fixed the next day, as I thought I should then be stronger for the journey. During all the time that intervened, Pierrette was in a state of uncontrollable excitement. She laughed, danced, chattered, and seemed beside herself with joy. She seemed frequently on the point of saying something, and as often checked herself. When I questioned her, she parried my inquiries by saying that she had prepared a little surprise for me at Bellevue—but she would not tell—no, not for the world! The morning came at length. I had thought much of 'this poor monsieur' of whom Pierrette had told me; but since the evening I had received the letter from the baron, she had remained unaccountably silent whenever I had spoken of him. Before we left the hotel, I gave

her a card with my address at Bellevue written upon it, and desired her to leave it with the concierge in case he should ever call again; for I had a haunting desire to see and know this man. 'And so he never came again, Pierrette?' I said as I gave it to her.

'O no, madame, no.'

'Can you not describe his appearance, his complexion, his height?'

'Me, madame! Ah ciel! not I! I do not observe gentlemen.'

So it was of no avail; and as we left the card and rolled away in the fiacre, I sighed to think that I might never know him.

I was still weak, and the noise of the carriage, the sight of the crowded streets, the glittering shops, the thronging vehicles, distressed and fluttered me. I leaned back in the corner, and closed my eyes. When I again opened them, we were out of the gay city, and passing along a country road bordered by barren fields and leafless trees. The air was fresh and clear, and there was a look of awakening spring in everything around. I felt a great peace and resignation steal upon me, and, though I was very silent, I felt happier. We passed many pretty country-houses; a thick wood green with wintry firs; then down a lane arched overhead by trees—a perfect bower in the summer season. The coach stopped suddenly before a garden-gate, in the front of an exquisite little country-house, all overgrown with dark glossy ivy, and fenced in by trees. Here we alighted. Pierrette gave me her arm, and led me through the house—all was new, charming, and complete.

'Is madame content?' asked Pierrette smiling.

Content! It was but too good—and the rent I feared—— But Pierrette laughed, and shook her head. 'Would not madame now wish to walk through the garden?'

So we went out from the windows of the salon, and down a flight of stone steps upon the grassy lawn. Even at this season the place looked beautiful. The tiny crocuses and snowdrops were just blossoming forth above the mould; the laurel, the fir, the laurustina with its pink clustering blossoms, and the thick ivy, lent a green like spring-time. There was a summer-house at the end, with a tiny fountain in front.

'Madame must rest in the summer-house for a few moments,' said Pierrette, as she made me take a seat.

What was there in so simple a thing as a bouquet of camellias to make me start, and blush and tremble as I did, to see it lying there upon the little rustic table? I rose, half terrified, as if to go—there was a footstep on the gravel-walk—Pierrette clapped her hands, and ran away.

'Pierrette! Pierrette!' I cried, and was about to follow, when a dark form interposed, a gentle hand took mine, and led me back into the arbour. I did not look upon his face, but my heart told me who it was, even before he spoke to me. Blind as I had been before, I knew all now! 'Alice! Alice!' said



Herr Stolberg as he placed me in the seat and stood before me—  
‘I love you!’

I made no reply, and he went on.

‘Alice! I have loved you for the last ten years—even since you were a little child. When you were a child, I was a man; I have now reached middle life, and you are in the bloom of youth. Can you love me?’

I was silent, but the tears slowly filled my eyes and dropped upon my cheeks.

‘I never left you, Alice,’ he said in the same low tone, ‘since that night when you departed in sorrow from your German home. On the roof of the same coach I travelled with and protected you. In Paris, I have watched over you; and when death threatened to remove you from my care, I was ready also to die!’

I looked up into his dark eyes, and standing there in his noble truth and generous love, to me he seemed beautiful—it was the beautiful of the soul.

‘I have prepared this summer-home for you. Be my wife, Alice, and let us share it together! When the autumn comes, we will return to Germany, and to our art.’

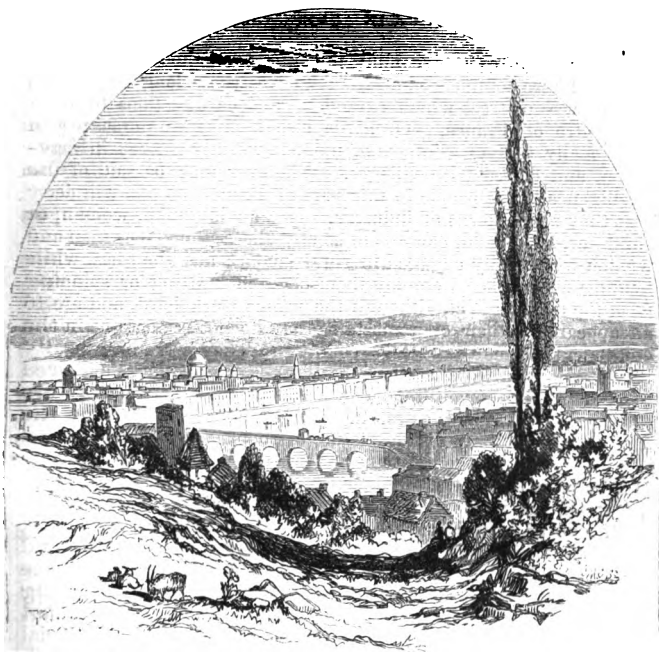
And I smiled sadly through my tears. ‘But I have no voice,’ I said softly.

‘I know it; still you have voice enough to say: “I love you”—and that is all the melody my heart asks from thine.’

And so, reader, I said it.

The words were spoken fifteen years ago, and I have not repented of them yet.





## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.



LONG with a party of friends, in the summer of 1844, I was able to make a tour in Auvergne and some other parts of France not ordinarily visited by the English; the principal object of our excursion being to see some of the more curious geological phenomena, for which the Auvergne country is celebrated. Our route, in its early part, by Boulogne and Paris to Orleans, was of the usual common-place character. At Orleans, we were upon the Loire, and descended that river by a small steamer, which drew only two or three feet of water. To Blois was our first day's performance, and having landed there, we next day proceeded, by means of a hired calèche, to Vierzon, a town now reached by railway direct from Paris. At Vierzon, which is a small town on the Cher, where we stopped for the night, the country was observed to alter in

character from extensive alluvial plains to undulating hill and dale, and here commenced on the roadsides those long continuous lines of walnut-trees which extend in various directions through the centre of France. Orchards also became numerous; and occasionally we had glimpses of uplands warmly clothed in vegetation, and dotted with villages. Whatever may be said of the intelligence of the people in this part of France, no one will deny that they are patterns of industry. Not an idle man, woman, or child—or, I may add, cow—is to be anywhere seen. The men and women were busily engaged in rural labour; and the girls, while tending a few sheep, employ themselves in knitting or spinning with the distaff. Yet, although the people work hard, and are to all appearance their own masters, they do not seem to be in the enjoyment of many worldly comforts. They were universally barelegged, and wore wooden shoes, while their cottages appeared to contain little furniture. The beasts of draught we met were principally cows and asses, the former yoked in pairs by the horns, and forming a dismal picture of poverty and oppression.

Bourges, one of the most ancient towns in France, has nothing of interest to detain the stranger except an old cathedral, locally celebrated for its painted glass windows; which, however, did not strike us as worth more than a transient notice. We were, therefore, glad to quit the place on the day after our arrival, and proceed to Moulins, a distance of sixty miles, which a diligence with five horses spiritedly achieved in nine hours. Approaching Moulins, we find ourselves entering the fine flat vale of the Allier, rich in tall trees and the most luxuriant vegetation. Artificial grasses likewise make their appearance in the fields; and although it is only the 8th of July, bands of reapers are already busy cutting down the grain.

Moulins has a vastly superior appearance to Bourges. The streets are generally open, and pretty well paved; there are several spacious airing-grounds, adorned with trees, both within the town and in the environs; and the houses of the opulent classes are numerous and elegant. The Allier, which forms one of the principal tributaries of the Loire, is here crossed by a long stone-bridge; but though broad, it is a shallow stream, full of sand-banks, and of little value in inland navigation.

From Moulins we proceeded by diligence to Vichy, a fashionable resort in central France, and celebrated for its hot mineral springs. After remaining here a few days, we departed on our way to Clermont, or more correctly, Clermont-Ferrand. We had now entered the territory which is locally known as the Limagne. Crossing a ridge of hills, we have this fine country before us, spread out in all the glory of summer. We have the garden of France at our feet. The morning on which we reached this interesting spot was one of the most brilliant of the season, and our eye had an opportunity of taking in the whole plain—rich in orchards, vineyards, bright green fields, and yellow crops of

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

grain—as far as its mountain boundary, formed by the range of Puys, or volcanic peaks, which it was our object to visit. A white cloud rested on the top of the central peak, the Puy-de-Dôme, marking its superior height and grandeur.

In the course of our ride across the plain, we passed through the small towns of Aigueperse, Riom, and Mont-Ferrand, the last situated on the summit of a rising ground, and consisting of heavy buildings of a dark-coloured lava.

At length we reached Clermont, favourably situated on a flattish low hill, sloping gently in all directions, at the verge of the Limagne. The ascending approaches to this ancient capital of Auvergne are described by old travellers as so vile and offensive, that we were pleasingly disappointed in finding them much improved, and that the town generally had in recent times undergone numerous reparations, so as to be now one of the neatest and best built in France. As at Mont-Ferrand, the houses are built of lava, and the streets paved with the same material. The lava-stone of Clermont is grayish-black, and full of small holes, like the cooled cinders of furnaces; but it is excessively hard, and so impervious to the weather, that the stones of the cathedral, which is built of it, though hewn 600 years ago, are as sharp in their angles as the day they were fashioned by the builder.

Leaving the examination of the town to a future opportunity, I was anxious to take advantage of the settled fine weather to pay my visit to the range of adjoining puys or peaks. To be done properly, this requires a guide, and the use of a car; for about five miles must be passed over in ascending the braes, or low hills, before we reach the base of the principal mountains. A car was accordingly hired, well provisioned for a day's excursion, and, accompanied by a geological friend from Edinburgh, who was fortunately on the same errand, and had already procured a guide, our party drove out of Clermont, on an expedition the most interesting in which we had ever been engaged. While pursuing our way beyond the barriers, let us consider for a moment what it is we are going to see.

In the year 1751, two members of the Academy of Paris, Guettard and Malesherbes, on their return from Italy, where they had visited Vesuvius, and observed its productions, passed through Montelimar, a small town on the left bank of the Rhône. Here they were surprised to observe that the pavement of the streets consisted of masses of basalt, brought from Rochemaure, on the opposite side of the river; and they were, moreover, told that there was a mountain-tract in that direction which abounded with similar rocks. Incited by a love of science, they proceeded in search of the basaltic hills, and, step by step, reached Clermont in Auvergne, discovering every day fresh reason to believe in the volcanic origin of the mountains they traversed. At Clermont, all doubts on the subject ceased. The currents of lava in the vicinity, black and rugged as those of Vesuvius, descending uninterruptedly

from some conical hills of scoriæ, most of which present a regular crater, convinced them of the truth of their conjectures; and they loudly proclaimed the interesting discovery. On their return to Paris, M. Guettard published a memoir, announcing the existence of volcanic remains in Auvergne, but obtained very little credit. The idea appeared to most persons an extravagance; but the obstinacy of ignorance was finally forced to yield to conviction, and the investigations of Demarest in 1771 put an end to all doubt on the question.

The more recent inquiries of our indefatigable and ingenious countryman Scrope, and others, French and English, have brought the volcanic region of Auvergne prominently into notice as a field of geological study. Nor is it without interest to ordinary travellers. A great cluster or chain of conical mountains, each an extinct volcano, left very much in the form it possessed at the moment when it ceased to act—which may have been ten thousand years ago, for what anybody can tell—is not a thing seen every day, or in every situation. Vesuvius, Stromboli, and Etna, smoke and rage, and from time to time vomit forth their currents of liquid lava, and their showers of scoriæ. Here are dozens of volcanic heights once equally active, but now dormant, and covered with the soil and herbage of accumulated centuries—a region of fire and smoke transformed by time into a tranquil sheep and cattle walk. It was the central point of this once extraordinary scene of commotion that we were going to see.

Our way lay along a road which wound itself in a singular and picturesque manner up the acclivities of the hills, in a direction westward from Clermont, every turn of the path revealing some new and striking prospect. The lower ridges, consisting of calcareous stratified rocks, were chiefly covered with vineyards; but to these succeeded small fields of grain; and these, in their turn, gave way to heathy uplands, through which projected masses of bare rock, either lava or granite. These features of the country around us were, however, for the time, less attractive than its human inhabitants. Nearly all the way, from the gates of Clermont to the summit of the plateau on which the peaks appear to rest, a distance of several miles, we encountered and passed a seemingly continuous band, or series of bands, of mountaineers proceeding with cars of firewood to market. This was my first introduction to the descendants of the ancient Gauls, as they are supposed to be, and it was with something more than mere curiosity that I examined their garb and personal appearance, as they descended the successive slopes towards the plain. The cars, rude in their construction, and piled with chopped brushwood, were each drawn by two cows or oxen, bound together by a yoke across the forehead, to which the pole of the vehicle is attached. No reins were employed. Before each vehicle stalked its saturnine conductor, having a long rod over his shoulder, with which, by a touch, he guided his docile and downcast charge in any required

direction. The garments of the men were coarse, and wild in aspect: a black hat slouched over their grim features and long matted hair; while the bulk of the person was concealed under a cloak of striped woollen, confined like a woman's petticoat round the neck. Pouring down almost in a continuous line from the summit of the hills, the eye caught them at different points of the zigzag declivity, and was charmed with the picturesque effect of the scene. These mountaineers, as we were informed, speak a peculiar dialect, not understood by the natives of the towns, though they generally possess a sufficiency of the vernacular French to transact their business when coming to market with their rural produce. Persons competent to form a judgment, have declared that the patois of these mountaineers contains a number of Celtic words; and if so, there could not be a more convincing proof of their direct descent from the original inhabitants of Gaul. Their language, however, from the specimens of it printed in Clermont, appears to possess a much greater resemblance to Italian than any other tongue, from which a fanciful investigator might with equal plausibility assign to them a directly Roman origin. Like the rest of the French nation, they are doubtless Romanised Celts, only less changed and cultivated than their more highly-favoured countrymen. In character, they are rude and uninstructed; and I was assured that the crimes of a savage people are not uncommon amongst them.

Having attained the brow of the eminence, we found ourselves pursuing a slightly inclined plain, keeping the village of Orcines on our left, and observing on both sides tracts of land little better than a wilderness of scattered rocks and stones, and broken ground. At the distance of a mile further on, our journey with the car terminated. Alighting at an auberge by the wayside—a gloomy abode with a vaulted roof—we placed the haversack of provisions on the back of the guide, requested the driver of our vehicle to proceed round to the other side of the mountains to await our return, and forthwith betook ourselves to the serious business of a pretty long and toilsome walk through the heather. Our object was to reach the Pariou, the nearest hill on the south, a kind of stepping-stone to the chief of the puy. Fortunately, the ground and herbage were dry; the heath was blooming like a garden; wild thyme and lavender scented the air with their fragrance; bees hummed merrily in the sunshine; and happy little lizards of various hues ran in and out beneath the bushes.

The base of the Pariou is gained; and now commences the ascent. The hill is a singularly perfect cone, regular all round, and rising with a slope of about 35 degrees to a height of 738 feet above the plateau on which it rests. Taking advantage of every slip of path formed by cattle to fix our footing, and every bush to hold by, and sitting down to rest at least a dozen times during the journey, our party, ladies and all, at last gained the summit of the cone. It was an agitating moment. 'Le cratère!' exclaimed

Guillaume—'le voilà, mesdames et messieurs;' and sure enough there was before us the crater of the volcano. We stood on a rim of about twenty feet in breadth; behind us was the exterior of the cone which we had climbed, and before us was a perfectly formed basin, 300 feet in depth, and with a circumference of 3000. The inward inclination of the sides of the crater appeared to be the same as the exterior declivity, and terminated in a flat bottom of perhaps forty feet in diameter. The whole was covered with grass and small bushes, the bottom of the basin being the most fertile. Although having no outlet, the great deep dish, as it may be called, was quite dry, the porous subsoil absorbing all the rain which can fall. We sat down within the brink to eat our first luncheon, and contemplate the interesting spectacle. The spot, from the shelter and fresh bite of herbage which it yielded, was evidently a favourite resort of the mountain herds. Round the shelving sides were narrow footpaths formed by the cattle, resembling the steps of an amphitheatre, conducting to the flat bottom of the basin—the closed orifice whence burst forth the loose material which formed the mass of the cone. The rim or upper edge I have stated as being about twenty feet in width; but it varies somewhat in its proportions, and is a little higher on the south than the other sides.

It appears from minute investigation, that the Pariou has been formed by successive discharges at distant intervals. On the north and north-west, a segment of a former crater encircles the cone, the broken part having been carried away by a vast current of lava, which has flowed in streams towards the plain on the east, intruding on the granitic rocks and calcareous deposits, and forking off in branches, which, having cooled and become hard in the course of ages, now form those valuable quarries whence the building-stone of the Limagne is partly dug. To these streams of lava, chiefly, as is believed, from the Pariou, the phenomenon of bare basaltic rocks and loose stones on the surface of the declivities and adjoining parts of the plain is likewise due. The rock, where it assumes a ridge-like form projecting from the ground, is called by the French a *coulée* of lava; and *coulées*, as well as vast quantities of fragments, encumber the vineyards in the lower slopes of the hills.

Whatever may have been the early eruptions of the Pariou, those at the conclusion of its career have consisted of scorïæ, puzzolana, and volcanic sand; where the turf happens to be broken, a reddish loose soil of granular particles is exposed, and of materials of this nature the entire cone seems to be composed: indeed, no other than loose matter, falling in showers about the mouth of the crater, could have formed the elegant and regular cone which now exists.

From the crest of the hill a fine view is obtained of other conical mounts on the north-west, beyond the line of road by which we had approached with the car; but as the view is still better from the grand puy, we spent little time in its contemplation, and

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

pushed off in quest of fresh spots of investigation. Our way still lay southwards, and it was in this direction we descended the Pariou, a feat considerably more difficult than that of its ascent. At the end of half an hour, the southern base of the cone was gained, and we found ourselves again on a heathy tract, open to the eastward, and rising towards the south, where, before us, at the distance of a mile, rose the high but unshapely mass styled the Petit Puy-de-Dôme, to which another walk, and frequent rests among the bushy heather, at length brought us.

The ascent of the Petit Puy is almost half accomplished ere we reach the steep part of its sides, for its base is spread considerably out from the main protuberance of the hill. On attaining the more abrupt part of the ascent, the path which we had to pursue was up a kind of ravine or gash, formed by the washing away of the loose matter, and by the continual abrasion of the mountain cattle. The tracks of wheels, also, shewed us that this formed a road for the rude cars of the mountaineers in their visits to these high pasturages. The broken sides of the ravine were composed altogether of puzzolana, a reddish material almost as loose as rough sand or gravel. The embarrassment of our journey up this awkward pathway was in due time rewarded with the same pleasurable sensations we had experienced on reaching the top of the Pariou. We were landed upon a broad but irregularly shaped abutment—a stage, as it may be called, from the loftiest protuberance—and here, to our satisfaction, we had before us the crater whence the matter composing the sides of the mountain had been ejected. This crater is somewhat less in its dimensions than that of the Pariou, but is equally regular in form and beautiful in surface. Its depth is 292 feet, and its diameter nearly the same. The only difference between it and the other perfectly formed craters is, that, instead of having only a narrow rim at top, it lies imbedded in the shoulder of the hill, having to all appearance been overtopped by later protrusions. From, as I imagine, its neat form and sheltered situation, it is called by the people of the district, *Le Nid de la Poule*, or *Hen's Nest*. At the time of our visit, a herd of cattle, under the charge of a ragged *Flibbertigibbet*, came leisurely round the corner of the hill, and descended the sides of the crater in quest of the pasturage with which it was covered; and we left them grazing on its flat and verdant bottom.

At the point we had attained on the Petit Puy-de-Dôme, we were at an elevation of about 3600 feet above the plain of the Limagne, but were still from 700 to 800 feet lower than the top of the Puy-de-Dôme itself. Another and much more toilsome ascent was therefore yet to be performed, and as we had already been several hours on our feet, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that the ladies should not attempt to climb the impending height, but, selecting a pleasant spot below the rocky knoll of the Petit Puy, lay out dinner, and remain at rest on the heather till our return. These and other grave matters being arranged, we



proceeded to climb the gigantic Puy; an account of which may now be given.

The direction by which we had approached the Puy-de-Dôme brought us to its northern base, whence it is most easily ascended, because on this side you have already attained a considerable altitude by easily sloping paths, before reaching its more abrupt part. Towards Clermont on the east, it presents a front of nearly 2000 feet in height, whereas from the shoulder of its parasitic appendage, the Petit Puy-de-Dôme, it rises only from 700 to 800 feet. The ascent on the north is likewise aided by a gash, or ravine, reaching nearly to its summit, partly caused by the soft and friable nature of the soil, and partly by the scrambling of cattle going to and returning from the high pasturages of the mountain. By means of this broken and frequently perplexing tract, we were able to make our way up what may be called the neck of the hill; sometimes rounding the corner of a projecting rock, which left but slender footing; at others sitting down to rest on masses of turf, in the course of dislodgment by torrents; and occasionally standing to look about us and examine the material of which the mountain appears to be composed.

The crowning point, however, was at length attained; the ascent of the zigzag ravine bringing us to a broad landing-place, where a herd of cattle were browsing, whence, by climbing up the back of the protuberance forming the summit, we placed ourselves on the topmost height of the Puy-de-Dôme—a height of 4842 feet above the level of the sea.

We were fortunate in finding the summit of the mountain free of the clouds which so frequently rest upon it, and distinguish it from others of the group. This tendency to put on and retain a fleecy cloud upon its top, in certain conditions of the atmosphere, has made it in some measure a weather indicator to the good folk of the Limagne. 'The settlement of the cloud,' observes M. le Cocq, a geologist of Auvergne, 'is a spectacle frequently presented to the inhabitants of Clermont; for it is seldom that twenty-four hours pass over without a mist gathering, more or less, on the top of the puy. At first, nothing more is observed than an extremely rarefied vapour, or light gas, which envelops the upper part of the mountain, and which does not conceal the verdant clothing that covers it. This vapour shapes itself to the outlines of the hill, gradually augments in density, and finally forms itself into a convex cloud, which surrounds the summit. For this reason, it is commonly called the *Cap of the Puy-de-Dôme*. The vapour appears most frequently during the fine evenings of spring, and may properly be called a "night-cap," for it remains on till the succeeding morning. Then its density is seen to diminish; it becomes translucent, presently transparent, and disappears as it had been formed. This cap, following so exactly the outlines of the peak, demonstrates the attraction exercised by the puy on this singular cloud, the thickness of which is everywhere the same.

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

Sometimes two caps are observed, one over the other, but always preserving the form of the summit on which they rest. The feeble rays of the sun, as they disappear beyond the plains of the Creuse, often tinge this dome of vapour with a golden tint; presently, a light gust of wind will spring up, and the whole will be distributed with inconceivable rapidity.

But we must turn to the more immediate object of our visit to this remarkable mountain. Our first consideration was to examine the spot around us. There was no crater. The summit of the conical knoll was a plateau of forty to fifty feet in diameter, somewhat broken or disturbed by art; for in early times it had been the site of a hermitage, long since destroyed, and scattered in fragments down the precipitous face of the mountain; and now, in the centre of the bare and broken surface, is erected a tall pole, serving probably as a landmark in trigonometrical surveys of the country. There being no remnant of crater on the top of the Puy-de-Dôme, and its entire mass, so far as observable, being trachyte, a species of granular rock, different theories have been formed respecting its origin. I believe it is now pretty well understood that the mountains of this nature were formed by the upward propulsion of trachyte in a state of liquid lava; the liquid, however, not being so thin and fluent as the basaltic lavas, and therefore, instead of flowing in streams, it remained chiefly in heaped-up masses, ultimately shaped by the weather into rounded protuberances. The puy's of domite or trachyte are much less numerous than those of scorïæ, there being only three small ones lying north of the Puy-de-Dôme, and one rising at its south-western base, called the Puy-de-Gromanaux; but this exhibits the wreck of a crater formed by irruptions of scorïæ forcing their way through the already deposited cliffs of trachyte. Further to the south, domitic puy's do not occur nearer than Mont d'Or, which is of the same material as the Puy-de-Dôme, and most likely of the same era. There are as many as seventy in number, the height straggled in and out over a heathy upland, and varied alike in size and altitude.

The finest sight was unquestionably towards the north, for in that direction the cones were most numerous and thickly set. The Nid de la Poule, on a low shoulder of the Petit Puy, was at our feet. Further on was Pariou, standing well out of the heathy plateau. Between these two, but more to the left, were the Great and Little Suchet; and on a line with them to the north was the Puy-de-Come, the most bulky of all. I must stop a moment to describe the Come. It is a finely formed conical mount, rising to a height of 900 feet, and having on its summit two craters, a larger and smaller, close to each other. The depth of the largest is 250 feet. The craters do not expose an even orifice, but rather yawn a little on one side, as if part of the rim were carried away. The hill stands so much west from the line of the Pariou, that it is over the ridge of the plateau, and the land, instead of inclining to the plain of the Limagne on the east, has an easy slope towards the

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

valley of the Sioule on the west. In the latter direction, a stream of basaltic lava had burst from the side of the Puy-de-Come, and rushing over the granite rocks in its path, had flooded the lower region beyond, filling up the ancient bed of the Sioule, and otherwise effecting great alterations in the configuration of the country. The tracing of this stream of lava, now an irregular sheet of darkish coloured rock, exposed in many places to the eye, forms one of the most interesting objects of inquiry to the geologist in Auvergne. To the general observer, the view of the country on the west, though extensive, embraces no distinct object of interest; and we are naturally attracted towards the south, in which direction we have a prospect of great grandeur. In the more immediate vicinity are a number of cones, of one or two craters, and one with three, disposed like the leaves of a trefoil. The name of this hill is the Puy-de-Monchié; and its largest crater, which lies nearest us, is 340 feet in depth. Further on, and more to the east, are several cones, one of which, the Puy Noir, has a vast crater of 590 feet deep, but is broken down on its eastern side. Another cone near it, the Puy de la Vache, has likewise a crater broken away in the same direction. The destruction in both cases, as is supposed, was caused by the overflowing of the lava which rose in the crater, and broke down the weakest of its sides. From the vent so made, long continuous streams flowed into the lower grounds on the east, and in the present day they can be traced with perfect accuracy down the respective valleys of two brooks, tributaries of the Allier. That along the winding valley of Thieux extends a length of ten miles.

Our view, including these interesting cones, is arrested at the distance of seven or eight miles by Mont d'Or, a huge dark mountain, which, with its parasitic hills, like itself, of volcanic origin, closes the scene. Could we look in the far distance beyond, still should we see hill after hill, forming a wild mountain-tract almost to the borders of the Mediterranean. Shut out in this direction, we turn our faces towards the south-east, in which we have the Graviénère, an imposing volcanic cone, composed principally of a blackish coloured puzzolana, called by the natives *gravier-noir*; and hence the name of the hill. Beyond the Graviénère are two hills not less interesting in their nature and history. One of these, a conical mount, is topped by the ruins of a feudal castle—*Montrognon*; and another immediately beyond it, of a shape altogether different, was the site of *Gergovia*, the most impregnable city in Gaul. It is needless, however, to speculate on these hills at present, for they afterwards became an object of special pilgrimage during our stay in Clermont; and we pass on to the next step in our panorama. We have now, in facing the east and north-east, the great plain of the Limagne, studded with gray old towns, rich in vegetation, and hemmed in by the belt of rugged hills which divide the vale of the Allier from the head waters of the Loire. Rising chiefly on the eastern side of the plain, there are likewise

visible several conical mounts or puys; but they do not at present call for particular notice.

Having now taken a comprehensive view all round from our lofty station, we thought it time to descend, for we had a toilsome afternoon's walk yet before us. Much of the latter part of our way down the precipitous eastern face of the Puy-de-Dôme was effected in the dry bed of a torrent; and our carriage, for a mile after we reached it, had to perform a most awkward journey over broken masses of puzzolana and gravier-noir. There was so little ease or safety in the vehicle, that we dismissed it, with directions to take us up at Royat, a small town at the foot of the Val de Fontanat, an exceedingly romantic valley which we purposed to perambulate on foot. Instead, therefore, of going straightway home to Clermont, we struck into a cross-road to the right, by an umbrageous green lane, which conducted us to a scene of surprising beauty to a draughtsman, and of the deepest interest to the geological inquirer.

The Val de Fontanat, which runs due east from near the base of the Puy-de-Dôme, commences at its upper extremity with a natural curiosity. Emerging from a mazy and rude pathway, you are suddenly introduced to a cluster of cottages, with a mill picturesquely placed at the head of the glen. Approaching the brook, we find that beneath our feet, and all around, the water is gushing from beneath the rocks, and in such volume, that, within a space of a few yards, it possesses sufficient force to move the mill. The water, fresh and sparkling, is to all appearance a rivulet that has been submerged by a stream of lava from an adjacent volcano, but which, in the course of ages, has found its way into open day, forcing away the rocky materials that impeded its course. A natural excavation, sixty-five feet in depth, attests the force of the current, and the thickness of the basaltic lava which has poured into the valley.

The rivulet, augmenting at short intervals by new contributions from beneath the rocky banks of the glen, soon becomes a stream of considerable local consequence. As we descend along its left bank, the valley expands and deepens, reminding us of the romantic glen of the Eak at Roslin. There is a charm about the valley, however, which is wanting in our Scottish ravines. The sloping sides, disposed chiefly as orchards and meadows, are of the brightest green. An originally thin soil, through which here and there protrude crags of granite, has been rendered highly fertile by a process of artificial irrigation, of which I know no example among the hill-lands of our own country. Wherever a thread of water can be diverted from the descending channel it would naturally adopt, it is conducted along the winding braes, always inclining downwards, for the sake of fall, but zigzagging, meeting with and separating from other threads, running this way and that way for miles, so that the whole vale, from the top to the bottom of its lofty banks, may be described as a great net-work of rivulets,

producing the richest crops of brilliantly green herbage. As running-water is charged with similar beneficial properties in all countries, there is no valid reason why the rivulets, which now dash almost uselessly down our mountain ravines, should not similarly be turned aside to irrigate and fertilise the sides of adjacent hills. Yet it is long ere a foreign custom, whatever be its excellence, meets with acceptance. More than half a century ago, Arthur Young recommended the irrigation of Auvergne to the notice of British agriculturists, without effect; and the present hint, coming from a much less weighty authority, has no chance of being more successful.

We pursued our way along a road the most picturesque, but also the vilest in creation. In some places, the track was impassable from large boulders and ruts full of water; nevertheless, it is used by the cars of the mountaineers, and a few of these we met drawn by cows, in pairs, or what may be called four-in-hand, the wretched animals pulling the wheels over stones that threatened the jangling apparatus with destruction. In the course of the journey, the most fatiguing and perplexing which we had encountered, we peeped into a few of the cottages of the peasantry, or small proprietors; for I was told that most of them own the fields they till. But such dens of darkness, dirt, and poverty, I never before beheld, although I believe there are as bad in the remote parts of the British islands. Some of the huts appeared to be nurseries of infants. In one, with a floor no better than a stable, there were half-a-dozen cradles, each containing a sickly-looking baby. The ladies of our party, as may be supposed, were greatly affected by such an unlooked-for exhibition; and did not rest till they had ascertained that to these loathsome hamlets many children belonging to Clermont are sent to be nursed.

The sun was declining behind the mountains when we reached the town of Royat, near the outlet of the valley. Here we stopped a few minutes to examine a cluster of bath-houses erected over a thermal spring of great volume. The temperature of the water we ascertained to be 88 degrees Fahrenheit. A bathing establishment was erected here by the Romans, and at the time of our visit, part of the old walls was in the course of removal, to make way for improvements—a necessity, if it was one, which I could not but regret. To Royat forms a favourite half-hour's excursion, by cars, from Clermont. The small town, old and confined, is no way deserving of attention; but the situation is sequestered, and abounds in natural beauties. The road to Clermont is also pretty, being environed with handsome villas and luxuriant gardens. Driving along it in the carriage, which had waited for us at Royat, our fatigues were almost forgotten, and when set down in the Place de Jaude, in Clermont, one and all acknowledged that the day had been one of the happiest of their existence.

Sitting at the open windows of his hotel, at the north side of the Place de Jaude, in Clermont, the traveller will be interested

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

in observing, clear over the tops of the houses on the south, and at the distance of four to five miles, a hill singular in its shape and appearance. All the other hills in this part of Auvergne are less or more conical, but this one resembles a huge table, its rugged sloping sides appearing to terminate in a plain, level with the rounded tops of the neighbouring mountains. Thousands of travellers doubtless bestow only a momentary attention on this strangely shaped mass, and there ends the matter; but others, inquiring its name, perhaps learn that few mountains in France have obtained such celebrity, and accordingly spend a day's excursion upon it before leaving the country. I wish to say a few words respecting this hill.

Anciently, Gaul—modern France—was inhabited by a number of independent tribes, each in itself a little nation; a few of these nations only uniting on occasions of common and extreme danger. Taking advantage of this weakness of organisation, the Roman Republic despatched Julius Cæsar with an army to effect the conquest of the country. Successful everywhere he went, this sagacious general was baffled by the heroism of the Averni, the tribe who inhabited what we now term the Auvergne mountains. Although a rude and uncultivated people, these mountaineers displayed considerable ingenuity in defending themselves, by means of fortifications of earth and beams of wood. When Cæsar, at the head of six legions, entered the territories of the Averni, he was brought to a pause before Gergovia, a city strongly fortified in this manner, on the flat top of the hill which we behold from our windows in Clermont.

According to Cæsar's own account of his attack on Gergovia, he found it one of the most difficult of his enterprises. The gallant Averni, headed by Vercingetorix, and assisted by detachments from other Gaulish tribes, had a complete command of the hill; and with enormous stones, darts, and arrows, they destroyed the besiegers when they attempted to approach. The Roman general secured a favourable position, as he tells us, on a neighbouring height, and by various stratagems tried to circumvent the Averni. As a last resource, he led on an attack by the back part of the hill, where the ascent is less abrupt, and was able to attain a footing within an outwork of stones; but he found it necessary to retreat from this dangerous position. The Gauls, inspired by the cries of their women, who appeared with dishevelled hair on the ramparts, drove the most impetuous of the legions back with great slaughter. Seven hundred Romans fell in the engagement. After spending several days fruitlessly in manœuvring on the plain, with a view to seduce the Gauls from their vantage-ground, Cæsar was forced to abandon the siege.

Interesting from the figure which Gergovia thus makes in ancient history, as well as from its geological character, my friend and I resolved on making it the object of a day's pilgrimage. We accordingly hired a car for the purpose; and one morning pretty

early, along with Guillaume as guide, sallied out on the proposed journey. Our way lay almost due south from Clermont, and conducted us along a series of miserable narrow roads, ascending between the rude walls which bound the small vineyards and fields on the lower slopes. Ere we reached the limits to which the car could advance, the day became intensely hot. Gadflies flew about us in swarms, and lighting on the poor hack which dragged our vehicle, drew blood at a thousand points. Near the village of Ceyrat, we abandoned the car, and took to clambering the ugly broken path, which was not particularly easy; for, while one hand was engaged in holding an umbrella overhead to intercept the rays of the sun, the other was busy keeping the flies at a proper distance.

Our first object was to ascend Montrognon, whose western flank we had already gained. This is a hill remarkable among many remarkable hills. It is a tolerably regular cone, broad at the base, and terminating in a small plateau, on which stands the tall and picturesque ruin of a castle. Unlike the puys we had formerly visited, it is a mass of columnar basalt resting on calcareous matter, the basalt to all appearance being the relict of a stream of lava which had flowed over the fresh-water limestone of the plain, and been subsequently raised to its present position. Having scrambled across the uppermost vineyards, we reached a steep slope, an entire tract of loose basaltic stones, and on this we climbed to the top of the eminence. Although considerably lower than the range of puys at a distance of a few miles in the north-west, the view from the apex was charming, for it immediately overlooked on all sides fertile rural scenes. The ruin, so conspicuous for many miles across the Limagne, occupied the whole plateau, and must at one time have been a massive keep, with outworks—the stronghold of one of those Auvergnat barons whose oppressions led to their extirpation in the reign of Louis XIII. The walls remaining, built of the blue basalt of the hill, measured eight feet in thickness, and may yet endure the returning blasts of a hundred winters.

To get to Gergovia, it was necessary to descend the hill on its south side, and from the valley below climb another eminence towards the east. Two hours were consumed in this intermediate journey—heat awful, and the shade of every walnut and cherry tree thankfully accepted. Guillaume's flask of *vin-ordinaire* and water, cooled at a fountain by the way, was in frequent requisition. The road conducted us by what must be called the back of Mount Gergovia—supposing the side next Clermont to be its face—and most likely by the direction in which Cæsar made his attack. Shaped, as I said, like a table, its upper edge for a space of forty to fifty feet is a crag, bristling with rocks and splinters; and when one struggles his way over these barriers, he finds himself on a plain covered with about as many stones as blades of grass—an arid stony waste—which, however, at the time of our visit, afforded a scanty pasture to a flock of sheep.

And here stood the city of Gergovia. We walked about to discover if possibly any remnant were visible; but not a remnant, nor the faintest outline of a remnant, can be discovered. The plain seemed to be from two to three miles in length from east to west, by from a quarter to an eighth of a mile across. The ground having been ransacked by antiquaries, has yielded up a number of Gaulish medals, weapons, utensils, and other objects. The remains of a cavern have also been discovered. The exterior defences having been constructed chiefly of timber, time has long since swept them from existence; and the same agency has destroyed the interior buildings, which in all likelihood were of the same rude and simple materials. Along the verge of the plateau, the heaps of stones are more than usually numerous; and these may have been concerned in giving strength to the walls, from which the Gergovians committed such havoc on their enemies.

Satisfied with an inspection of the plateau, we proceeded down the steep fronting Clermont, with the view not only of returning homeward, but of examining the geological structure of the mountain. The north side, which we descended, is peculiarly favourable for this kind of scrutiny. The torrents of winter have hewed a ravine of considerable depth, from the higher to the lower grounds, and in which the various strata, one above another, are exposed to the prying curiosity of the tourist. From an observation of the ravine, as well as of the upper part of the hill, it appears that the whole protuberance is an alternation of currents of basaltic lava with the calcareous strata of the fresh-water formation. First, on a level with the plain, we have a bed of yellowish white limestone, full of the organic remains which distinguish the general substance of the Limagne. Then comes a thick covering of lava, which had flowed from a neighbouring volcano, and inserted itself into all the irregularities of the soil over which it poured. Above this hard rock come calcareous or fresh-water strata again, here and there blended with another stream of basaltic lava which had flowed over all, and formed what may be called a top-dressing to the heap. What countless ages must have elapsed before this curious alternation of sedimentary and volcanic matter could have been effected—ages to which the historical period—Cæsar's visit, for example, 1900 years ago—is but a day!

Gergovia is not singular in its constitution. A number of other hills in its vicinity exhibit similar appearances. The probability is, that the whole originally formed one mass. By the washing away of the softer intermediate parts, an ancient plateau has been divided into separate hills. Alternate upheaving and depression by subsequent subterranean agency have, in all likelihood, helped to complete the phenomenon. That everything has been very much as it is—cold, hard, and fixed—here and in other parts of Auvergne for 2000 years, is beyond a doubt. Cæsar saw the country as it now appears to the tourist; nor does it seem that he was at all aware that the mountains over



which he led his legions had once smoked and raged like Vesuvius.

It would be reasonable for an inquiring mind to ask, if there be no expiring manifestations of the heat which once found vent in the volcanoes of Auvergne. The only existing symptom of this ancient combustion is found in the hot springs of Vichy, Royat, and Mont d'Or. The high temperature of these waters is, with probability, traced to the same agency which in former times produced the puits we had been visiting.

These hot mineral waters, however, are less singular than another kind of springs not uncommon in Auvergne, two of which, and by far the most remarkable, rise within the outskirts of Clermont. These waters, which gush in considerable volume from the ground, are called Fontaines Pétrifiantes; but this is scarcely correct. Calcareous in their nature, they only cover with a yellowish fawn-coloured crust any object with which they are long in contact. Being conducted by artificial channels from their source, the water drops from them, and forms vast stalactitic aggregations of limestone.

Led by a damsel, the naiad of the fountain, we are conducted through the garden to an erection of boards, a rude hut, into the roof of which we observe the water precipitated from its conduit. Opening the door, we perceive a house full of spray. The water, diverted into sub-rills, is dashed and splashed about on the floor, and on tiers of shelves, in a very odd sort of way, being permitted, after performing this service, to escape by a channel beneath. Looking through the spray from the multitude of cataracts, we perceive that, scattered all over the place, on the floor and on the shelves, there lie moulds of medals, and other objects, all in the process of receiving an incrustation. The spray falling in showers, deposits minute particles of the substance held in solution in the water, and which are so fine, that the water appears clear to the eye. In about three months, a mould, an eighth of an inch deep, is filled with the deposit, and yields a cast as exact and beautiful as if cut from a piece of polished stone. The casts are of two varieties. Those produced by the spring to which we were first conducted are of a yellow tinge, and as uniform in the grain as a piece of bone. The other spring, which dashes into a different receptacle, yields casts containing crystalline particles, and have a glittering mixed appearance; they are also less fine in their outlines. After satisfying our curiosity with the operative part of the establishment, we entered by invitation the *salle de commerce*—a store for the sale of products of the springs, where we purchased some articles as a remembrance of the place.

Having visited mountain tops and puits to our hearts' content, and seen some of the most interesting parts of Auvergne, we departed on our journey, taking the road by way of Thiers and Roanne to St Etienne. At this last-named place, we were within the threshold of the central manufacturing district of

France. The articles produced in St Etienne are firearms and ribbons—the latter alone, I believe, employing 40,000 workmen. Wherever one turns his eyes, he observes on the fronts of the tall houses the sign-boards of 'Fabricants de Rubans;' while many of the shop-windows are as gay as a parterre of flowers with specimens of this interesting branch of industry. At a bold venture, we asked one of the fabricants to shew us his atelier or workshop, and were politely conducted by him to a suburb on a hill adjoining the town, composed of rows of houses used as dwellings and work-places by the weavers. The atelier consisted of a front apartment, in which was a female winding silk thread on small reels, and a room behind, lofty in the roof, in which were two ribbon-weavers at work on their respective looms. In each loom there were twenty ribbons in process of weaving, of the most beautiful designs and colours; and the ladies of the party declared they had never seen anything so elegant. The men spoke cheerfully of their labour, and the woman, who had abandoned her reeling at our entry, hung about us, and seemed gratified to answer any questions concerning the mode of life among the ribbon-weaving population. She said that, with industry and economy, they had nothing to complain of—an acknowledgment which, I believe, could be made with propriety by the bulk of the manual labourers of every country.

After spending a day in this sort of loitering observation, we proceeded by a railway, provided with locomotives, but execrably managed, to Lyon.

The first glimpse of the Rhône, which we had on emerging from a vale down which the line of railway descends on its way to Lyon, was interesting, but failed in the magnitude which we had anticipated. The scene, however, improved as we approached Lyon, and crossed by a newly formed viaduct the river Saône, where it unites its waters with the Rhône. We were now landed on that flat triangular peninsula on which Lyon has been built, everything about us betokening that we had arrived in a busy and opulent city. With the Saône flowing past it on the south, and the Rhône on the north, both uniting at a point on the east, it may be said to possess a peculiarly favourable situation for commerce. Nor is it unsuitable as a place of agreeable residence. On the opposite bank of the Saône rises a long hill dotted over with mansions, which command a lovely prospect of the town and rivers; across the western part of the peninsula there is a similar hill, also covered with masses of building; while, on the further bank of the Rhône, long lines of new buildings, forming an elegant suburb, are starting into existence. The old town, consisting of a dense Parisian-looking cluster of streets, alleys, and places, is the great theatre of business, and the whole being faced with fine broad quays, suitable for barges and steam-vessels, Lyon may be said generally to exhibit a fair picture of a large and prosperous provincial town.

Lyon, as everybody is aware, is the centre of the silk manufacture in France; and in the occupation of weaving and otherwise preparing, as well as selling this article, a great number of persons are employed.

The pleasure we had experienced in our visit to the atelier of the ribbon-weaver at St Etienne, made us anxious to see silk-weaving in this its chosen seat. Having an introduction to one of the leading master manufacturers, this was not difficult. By this gentleman we were despatched, under the charge of a clerk, a young Englishman learning the profession, to an atelier in which some of the finest fabrics are produced. Before describing what here came under our notice, I may say a few words respecting the method of manufacturing in Lyon. The manufacturer, who is the capitalist and employer, keeps no factory of his own. He gives out the silk to be dyed to one class of men, and to be woven by another. The individual, however, with whom he deals is not the actual weaver. He is a person who, by his skill and industry, has attained a position half-way between a workman and master; he owns two or three looms, which stand in an apartment connected with his dwelling, and he takes in work to be executed, partly by himself, and partly by men whom he employs. His chief duty, a most onerous one, demanding great patience and ingenuity, consists in putting the web into the loom, and arranging all the Jacquard and other apparatus necessary for producing the required pattern; after which, he superintends the operations of the weaver, who is a workman of inferior standing and capacity, and consequently receives inferior wages for his labour. The title universally given to the agent who undertakes work on this principle is that of *chef d'atelier*—chief of the workshop, or foreman.

It was the establishment of one of these manufacturing agents or chiefs that I was taken to see. Having been led to a narrow street behind the Place Bellecour, I was conducted to the fourth story of a large building by a stair, precisely resembling one of those common stairs in Edinburgh which give admission to the different floors of tall edifices. The atelier we were to visit occupied part of a floor, the looms working at a height of about sixty feet from the ground, over the heads of several strata of families, and under two or three strata still higher up the building. The scene was curious. We had never seen any mechanism half so intricate, and apparently unintelligible. The process was by Jacquard cards, but the patterns to be wrought embraced such variety of detail, that the apparatus was an inextricable maze of bobbins, strings, and other parts incomprehensible to a stranger. The chef, doffing his cap, received us with great politeness, and took pains to explain—vain thought!—the *mécanique* of the looms under his charge, three in number. Lifting up a piece of paper carefully pinned over the parts woven of the fabrics in hand, he shewed the beauty of their designs. One of the pieces was

magnificent. It was a gorgeous assemblage of colours finely harmonised in tone, with gold and silver thread in different combinations, and was intended, he said, for church banners. Another piece, the groundwork of which was white satin, interwoven also with gold and silver, was designed for priests' vestments in the church service. The chef mentioned, that such was the complexity of one of these pieces, that he was occupied three months in arranging it in the loom, and that the workman employed upon it could not weave more than a yard in the week. The price which it would cost the manufacturer was to be a hundred francs per yard. The operatives engaged in weaving such articles realise from twelve to fifteen francs for their weekly labour.

On the whole, we had reason to be much pleased with the courteous and intelligent answers, not only of this respectable chef d'atelier, but of the ribbon-weavers whom we conversed with at St Etienne, and took care not to confound them with the mass of inferior workmen whose dissoluteness keeps them poor, and whose outbreaks have done so much to injure and drive away the trade of Lyon and its neighbourhood. No higher proof of the superior ingenuity and prudence of this class of men could be given than the single fact, that among a hundred persons who received prize-medals for articles in silk, shewn at the late Parisian Exposition, as many as ninety were manufacturers who had originally been chefs d'atelier, and consequently sprung from the ranks of the people.

Lyon having been an important provincial capital of the Romans after their conquest of Gaul, the town and its neighbourhood have yielded a plenteous crop of antiquities to the archæologist. The town museum, which we spent half a day in roaming over, is an extensive quadrangular edifice, with its central court, arcades, and galleries filled with as many Roman altars, stone coffins, inscriptions, mosaic pavements, and other relics, as would set up a dozen museums in England. In the same handsome square which contains this palais des beaux arts, is the Hôtel de Ville, a large and elegant building of the Renaissance, where the Revolutionary Tribunal under Couthon and Collot d'Herbois held its infamous sittings. This structure, and the Hôtel-Dieu on the quay fronting the Rhône, are the finest public buildings in Lyon. The Hôtel-Dieu, which occupied us an afternoon in walking over, is an hospital of great antiquity, for the reception of all kinds of poor patients, whether sick or hurt. Besides the façade which overlooks the river, the house consists of several diverging lines of building behind, lighted from interior court-yards, the whole divided into floors centering at one point in an octagonal chapel. In the midst of this chapel stands an altar, which can be seen from the further extremity of each diverging gallery, and here divine worship is performed within sight, or at least within hearing, of the numerous patients early every morning. At the time of our visit there were 1500 patients in the

house, all of whom, as far as I could see, were under a careful and comfortable superintendence. The most remarkable thing in the economy of the establishment is, that it is under the entire guidance of Sisters of Charity, of whom 150 are constantly on duty, without fee or reward. How frequently, abroad, has one reason to admire the diligent and practical piety of this wonderful sisterhood! We found them in detachments, and in different parts of the house, performing the most varied functions. While certain sets attended in the sick-wards, others were occupied as cooks in the kitchen, and some acted as apothecaries in weighing and dispensing drugs in a large laboratory surrounded with bottles, jars, and retorts.

We spent about a week in Lyon, every day making an excursion to some spot of interest or beauty in the neighbourhood; among others, to L'Île Barbe, a small island in the Saône, situated a few miles above the town. The banks of this river are much more beautiful than those of the Rhône, being generally steep, and well clothed with woods and vineyards; they are likewise ornamented with a number of white and pretty villas. The Saône, a broad and massive stream, crossed by numerous suspension-bridges, is comparatively slow in its current, and permits the daily navigation of steam-vessels as far as Chalons, a stage onward to Paris. The Rhône, into which this fine river falls immediately below Lyon, is very different in appearance. About twice the size of the Saône, it flows hurriedly past the quays of Lyon, as if fearful of losing a moment in the long journey before it; and this busy headlong character it seems to possess from its cradle in Switzerland almost to its grave in the Mediterranean.

My previous acquaintance with the Rhône had been made upon Lake Lemman, where its waters, as they escape past Geneva, are beautifully blue. At Lyon, and all the way downward, this remarkable tint has disappeared, giving place to a dirty white colour, arising most likely from the chalky bottom over which it occasionally rushes in its course. Although augmented by the Saône, it still falls short of the Rhine in point of size, and is not to be compared with it in commercial importance. Its great misfortune is its rapidity of current, by which a regular traffic to and fro is greatly retarded. Steam-vessels go down from Lyon at a high rate of speed—sixteen miles an hour being common—and they are consequently well laden with passengers; but in coming up, their engines have a weary drag against the stream, and the passage is so tedious, that few travellers adopt it.

Desirous of visiting some places of interest in the lower parts of the river, we went on board of a steam-vessel which plied from the quay of Lyon, and started at the convenient hour of eleven in the forenoon: as the greater number of boats set out at three in the morning, in order to reach Marseille at night—a run of about 200 miles—we considered ourselves particularly fortunate in our choice. It being only about fifteen years since steamers

plied on the Rhône, and as they yet remain a monopoly in the hands of two or three companies, the vessels have little to recommend them as comfortable means of conveyance. That in which we started was, as is usual in France, somewhat dirty, and crowded with a miscellaneous company, occupied in drinking coffee, smoking, and spitting. Fortunately, we succeeded in securing seats on deck, under an awning, and, with the assistance of an obliging steward, made ourselves tolerably comfortable during the day's journey. The mild air, from the rapid motion of the vessel, was pleasant; the sunny banks flew past us like an ever-shifting picture; and the hope of what we were to see in the south, added a relish to our sensations. Here and there we came abreast of a town, and after a short stay, shot again ahead. Occasionally, also, the vessel passed beneath the extended platform of a suspension-bridge; and the number of new bridges of this description we saw in the course of the voyage, shewed that here, as almost everywhere else in France, improvement is steadily advancing. The banks of the river, though considerably less romantic than those of the Rhine, are not by any means spiritless. Besides a few old-fashioned towns, there are some castles on peaked heights, as rugged and ruined as an artist could desire: there are likewise some good snatches of precipice in the immediate vicinity of the river; and over the heads of tall poplars on the left bank, are obtained striking prospects of the hills of Dauphiné, and beyond them, rising in Alpine grandeur, the snow-clad mountains of Savoy.

At Valence, about half-way down the river, we left the steamer, and stopped for the night at a little unpretending inn—the *Hôtel du Nord*—where an old woman, the hostess, never seemed tired of shewing us acts of kindness. Departing in the morning from this agreeable hostel, we were again on the river, in another steamer bound for the south, and were by it carried through fully more picturesque scenery than on the preceding day. Towards the afternoon, however, the banks shrunk in altitude. We had left the Cevennes on the right and the hills of Dauphiné on the left, considerably behind, and were entering upon a new tract of country, in which mulberry-trees began to make their appearance, conclusive evidence that we had reached the southern division of France, in which silk is one of the staple products.

Interested as we should otherwise have been with these and other novelties, the circumstances in which we were involved unhappily contributed to destroy everything like gratification. The vessel, though large, and not without elegance in some of its furnishings, was a scene of filth and confusion. No attempt was made to preserve order. High and low, irrespective of fares, were commingled according to fancy in all parts of the vessel; and luggage and merchandise were strewed about in every direction. All this hubbub, however, was only a little droll. The terrible thing was the heat. The deck had no awning, and the sun glared

down upon us like a consuming fire. Seated on boxes and carpet-bags, our only shelter was our umbrellas, which we managed to hold up in the throng, and beneath which, as I found from a pocket thermometer, the heat was 88 degrees. As we advanced, shooting along from point to point, the vessel seemed as if leaving behind all that was fresh, green, and beautiful, and entering on a hot and suffocating desert.

It was with no small pleasure that we anticipated the termination to this terrific torture by a speedy arrival at Avignon, which was announced to be at hand. Certain ancient and well-baked gray turrets were seen on the horizon, over the heads of some drooping willows; and, turning into a branch of the river towards the left, we were, to our great joy, brought in front of Avignon, or, more properly, an old decayed wall, within which it was said the town would be found. In a few minutes, by the aid of a calèche in waiting, we were conducted within the walls of this curious old city, and had dived into the comparatively cool recesses of what we discovered to be one of the best inns in France. There was then, after all, yet a spot in the world where one could freely breathe. After our lengthened sufferings in the intense sunshine, the darkened apartments of the Hôtel d'Europe were taken possession of with unbounded delight.

Six hundred years ago, when kings were at liberty to give away portions of their dominions to please a momentary fancy, a king of France made a present of a district in the south-eastern part of his kingdom to one of the popes; and these half-priests half-princes contrived some time afterwards to acquire from a distressed princess of Naples an adjoining district, including Avignon. Thus the popes, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, had established their civil sway in this quarter of France, of which they were not deprived till the Revolution, fatal to so many privileges, in 1790. Throughout the greater part of the fourteenth and part of the fifteenth centuries, Avignon was the metropolis of the Christian world, and a scene of ecclesiastical magnificence. On the top of a low hill within the verge of the city, the palace of the popes was erected, and the remains of it are usually visited by tourists in their passage down the river.

Desirous of seeing this ancient edifice, as well as some other objects of interest, we ventured out on the morning after our arrival; though not till, by a short reconnoitre from the vestibule of the hotel, I had ascertained that the streets offered a tolerable shelter from the renewed fiery intensity of the sun overhead. The thoroughfares, as we found on issuing out on our excursion, consisted entirely of lanes environed by tall and substantial houses, many shewing the remains of fallen grandeur, but for the greater part prison-like in appearance, from their well-stanchioned windows, heavy portals, and the dreary dulness which prevailed in their precincts. Running in various directions, so as almost to be an inextricable maze, these lane-like streets offer a pleasant retreat

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

from the noonday heat, and are therefore, like the narrow avenues of eastern cities, in perfect adaptation to the climate. In the streets chiefly devoted to business, and where a few people were moving about, the excellent expedient was resorted to of extending sheets of canvas between the top stories of the houses on each side; and under these awnings, which were of different colours and sizes, you walked in a covered and cool avenue, in defiance of the raging heat beyond. Favoured by these grateful shades, and crossing sunny patches of street only when unavoidable, we reached the rocky height we were in quest of, and from which we had a momentary glance over the limestone region around, scorched wherever the land rose into protuberances, and green only where the madder-plants and mulberry-trees could draw nourishment from the artificially irrigated meadows. The surface of the irregular rocky height on which we stood was bare, and nearly as white as chalk. Not a vestige of vegetation was visible upon it. A broken stone-cross rose out of a limestone crag, a picture of desolation. The stones around were lime, the dust lime, everything lime. What a spot to be chosen for a palace! We first visited the cathedral, that being nearest the summit of the hill. It is a clumsy structure of different styles, with some portions said to have originally belonged to a temple of Hercules. The interior possesses some good paintings and carved monuments, and, like most of the churches I have visited in France, is at present in course of repair. The palace, a short way down the hill to the south, is a building of vast dimensions, and so irregular in character and shape as to admit of no useful description. It is, indeed, more like an old castle than a palace, and has stood several sieges. Much of the upper part is an open ruin; and here dungeons, halls, and oubliettes were pointed out to us as scenes of former oppression. One of the brokendown apartments was described as having been the seat of the Inquisition; and adjoining it are holes down which prisoners could be precipitated into gloomy abysses beneath. Possibly, the tales told by the modern conductress over the building partake somewhat too much of the marvellous to be altogether worthy of credit; but it is historically true that the Inquisitionary tribunal was established in Avignon in the thirteenth century, and that a sufficient number of acts of tyranny were perpetrated to insure the infamy of the spot. The lower wing of the building, extended by some new structures forming an inner court, is now employed as a barrack, which can accommodate 1000 soldiers. We ascended by broad flights of stairs to the higher floors, to see some pictorial remains on the walls and ceilings of the barrack-rooms, but they were scarcely worthy of the trouble. The whole place, at the time of our visit, was a hive of military, undergoing, I should imagine, an apprenticeship in being baked, previous to being sent across to Africa.

Among other public edifices which we visited, was the museum of the department of which Avignon is the capital. As it is rich



in antiquities and curiosities, I could here say much in the way of description, were I not aware that all such descriptions must necessarily be uninteresting; and I confine myself to once more offering a tribute of admiration to the French government for its encouragement of these provincial collections. In Clermont I saw one of great extent, abounding in natural and artificial objects illustrative of the locality; as, for example, specimens of every kind of rock discoverable in the department, and pictures and busts of distinguished natives. Here, at Avignon, the same kind of collection is found; and if any stranger is desirous of knowing what men famous in science, literature, or art, the district has produced, he has only to visit the picture-gallery of the town, and there he has them all before him. The library attached to the museum consists of upwards of 40,000 volumes, with some hundreds of manuscripts, the greater part the antique vellum-covered tomes of suppressed monasteries.

Few travellers possessed of a day's leisure quit Avignon without performing a pilgrimage to Vacluse—the Vacluse of Petrarch—situated at about eighteen miles' distance, in an easterly direction, from the town. Two motives present themselves for undertaking such an excursion—veneration, real or affected, for the memory of Petrarch; and a love of what is peculiar and interesting in natural scenery. Influenced by feelings of a mixed nature, we devoted a day to the journey, which, being performed in a covered calèche, promised to be exempt from any serious annoyance from the enemy.

We were to set out at six in the morning, but it was eight before the horses were trotting with us out at one of the old gateways of the town, and taking the road across the plain. Shortly after quitting Avignon, we had the satisfaction of riding within the shade of long rows of mulberry and willow trees, which bounded the well-irrigated and green fields, the irrigation, as far as we could judge, being by narrow rills conducted from the Durance, a river tributary to the Rhône. Further on, we ascended a height thin and rocky in the soil, and able only to give nourishment to the vines and olives with which it was covered. We now descended to another plain, well irrigated like the former; in this case the water-courses being from the Sorgue, whose fountain we were about to visit.

In the course of our journey, we passed through several villages, one of which exhibits a busy scene of water-wheels turning in the different branches of a stream, and being shrouded in trees, has a pleasant rural aspect. A ride along a cross-road now brings us to the valley of the Sorgue, up which we are conducted for the distance of a mile, the land gradually closing on each side till we reach the bosom of a vast dell in the range of hills. Hills rise on each side, bare and craggy, with projecting ledges, beneath which several dwellings have been venturously built, the roofs being large masses of flat rock adhering to the face of the precipice.

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

We have, in the bottom of the vale on our right, the beautifully clear river Sorgue, employed here, as further down, in driving mills, and the sight of which is refreshing in this land of heat and gray limestone rock.

As the carriage advances, we seem as if entering the bowels of the mountain; and this is indeed the case. In times long past, masses of the hills have fallen down and been washed away, leaving a great rude gap environed by precipitous acclivities, whose bare sides are only at intervals ornamented with fig and olive trees, or straggling vines. At the inner extremity, where the carriage-road ceases, we arrive at the village of Vacluse, consisting of scarcely a dozen houses on both sides of the river, including two or three mills, one of which is used for a paper-factory. Somewhere on the slip of garden-ground beneath the mills, on the left bank of the stream, stood Petrarch's house; and on the top of a bare knoll above, are the ruins of what is called Petrarch's castle, though it certainly never belonged to him, but was only the residence of one of his friends.

Just where the carriage draws up, in the centre of the small group of houses in the village, has been erected a monument, of the common-place pillar form, to Petrarch, which, it may be consolatory to the English to know, is as effectually hacked and cut by visitors, as if it had been placed in Westminster Abbey. Passing this memento of the poet, we walk by a narrow winding path up the right bank of the Sorgue, ascending and descending till we arrive at the bold front of the rock, beyond which there can be no further intrusion. We are, indeed, at the head of the glen; limestone cliffs, jagged like the pinnacles of a cathedral, impend overhead, while beneath, to the verge of the water, is a universal wreck of stones and rubbish. That which attracts our attention, however, is a wide yawning gulf at the base of the rock, the principal fountain of the river. Where the water comes from, no one can tell; but it is evidently delivered by the hill, and gushes out at many different points, cold, pure, and delicious. At the time of our visit, the weather having been for some time dry, the water only half filled the grotto in the rock in which it lay, as still as a mirror; and it is chiefly in winter that it rises to the point of overflowing. Occasionally, as we saw by the stones and rocks in its course, it pours forth impetuously, and in great volume. Now, that the river received none from this head fountain, the water welled out from beneath divers rocks, a little lower down the glen, and almost immediately formed a stream of twenty feet in breadth.

The fountain of Vacluse is one of the few things which does not disappoint the expectations of a traveller. The savage scenery of the hills, the quiet little village in the bosom of the dell, the variety of rare plants growing in the lower cliffs, the pretty and unsophisticated river just come so oddly into existence, a magnificent blue sky overhead, and into all the air of romance communicated by the long residence of Petrarch on the spot—all give

the place a peculiar charm. The poet's house, as I have said, was beside the stream adjoining the village; and here, he tells us in his *Epistles*, he lived while he wrote his sonnets to Laura, in that species of solitude which poets frequently dream of enjoying, but so seldom realise. Writing to a friend, he observes: 'You have often heard me speak of my warfare with the Nymphs, who reign at the foot of the rocks that lose themselves in the clouds. It is from these that the Sorgue, transparent as crystal, rolls over its emerald bed; and by its bank I cultivate a little sterile and stony spot, which I have destined to the Muses; but the jealous Nymphs dispute the possession of it with me; they destroy in the spring the labours of my summer. I had conquered from them a little meadow, and had not enjoyed it long, when, upon my return from a journey into Italy, I found that I had been robbed of all my possessions. But I was not to be discouraged: I collected the labourers, the fishermen, and the shepherds, and raised a rampart against the Nymphs: and there we raised an altar to the Muses; but, alas! experience has proved that it is vain to battle with the elements. . . . Here I please myself with my little gardens and my narrow dwelling. I want nothing, and look for no favours from fortune. If you come to me, you will see a solitary, who wanders in the meadows, the fields, the forests, and the mountains, resting in the mossy grottoes, or beneath the shady trees. I detest the intrigues of courts, the tumult of cities, and fly the abodes of pageantry and pride. Equally removed from joy or sadness, I pass my days in the most profound calm, happy to have the Muses for my companions, and the song of birds and the murmur of streams for my serenade.' Happy Petrarch!

We roved about for an hour or two in the spot consecrated by these outpourings from one of the most eminent men of letters of his time; and having, as we thought, exhausted Vaucluse, retraced our way to Avignon.

We were left in a boiling heat at Avignon, our only chance for fresh and somewhat cool air being a walk at dusk upon the long suspension-bridge which here crosses the left branch of the Rhône. On the third day, finding no vessel descending the river at a convenient hour, we departed from this ancient city by means of a voiture for Tarascon, another town about eighteen miles further down the Rhône.

The journey was destitute of general interest, and to us only amusing from the nature of the road. Having at two or three miles' distance from Avignon crossed the Durance by a long temporary bridge, the principal suspension one having been destroyed by a torrent some time before, we got into a tract of country apparently resting on limestone, of which the road was composed. The stones, ground by heavy roulage, formed a fine whitish brown dust several inches deep, and this, raised by a breeze which had arisen, swept in clouds over the face of nature. Hedgerows, trees, fields, houses, were universally covered, as if under a snow-

storm. The drift drove in the faces of men and horses, shrouding them with its odious particles. Suffering the melting heats of summer, we appeared to be wandering in a dreary waste in the heart of winter. Never till now did we feel the force of the observation made by travellers, that in the southern parts of Europe there are, practically, two winters in the year—the winter of winter, and the winter of summer, in either of which work out of doors is unpleasant or impossible.

In due time we got into Tarascon, a poor old town, whence we crossed the Rhône, by a suspension-bridge of magnificent proportions, to Beaucaire, another town equally old and dull, but now the scene of an annual fair, the largest of its kind in Europe, which we proposed to see before going further. This, however, we soon discovered to be no easy matter. Imbosomed still more in the limestone district of the south, the town was at present retired from public observation. It lay concealed in a cloud of the everlasting dust, and to get into its streets, one required to walk backwards and sideways with his face carefully buried in his handkerchief, feeling his way all the time with his feet! By dint of edging ourselves along in this curious fashion, we were enabled to reach a point on the quay, where numerous booths and tents were pitched for the accommodation of tradesmen with their goods. Here, from the general shelter afforded by these erections, as well as the concourse of people, the dust had comparatively little scope for its vagaries, and we were now permitted to look about us.

From the boulevard or quay adjoining the Rhône, we wandered into the heart of the town, everywhere finding the streets and lanes choked with people and merchandise. The scene was striking, and unlike anything we had seen before. Across the narrow streets were stretched gaudy sign-boards of yellow, red, and blue cotton, forming a brilliant perspective of colours; while above, from the tops of the houses, coverings of white linen were placed, to shelter the passengers and goods beneath, alike from the sun and the dust blown from the environs. Much of the merchandise was out of doors, ranged along the walls; and the fronts of the shops being quite open, like booths, everything was exposed to view. From flaunting signs overhead, we perceived that there were merchants from places in France hundreds of miles distant—cutlers from Thiers, jewellers from Paris, wine-dealers from Bordeaux, drapers and haberdashers from Lyon, booksellers from Limoges, gunmakers from St Etienne, and so on; tradesmen bringing their wares from the most remote localities. There were also not a few foreigners—Turks, Spaniards, Italians, Swiss, Greeks, Armenians—but not, so far as we could see, a single Englishman. Some streets were apparently devoted to wholesale dealings, and there carts were loading and unloading, and porters busy packing and carrying goods to and fro. Others were laid out for retail, and classified according to trades. One booth

contained nothing but small spinning-wheels, such as were used by our thrifty grandmothers before factory-spinning unsettled and uprooted domestic manufactures. It was interesting to observe, from the exhibition, that the housewives and maidens of the south of France were only beginning to use that which had been forty years ago thrown aside in the greater part of Scotland. To these good dames and demoiselles the spinning-wheel, antiquated as we are disposed to think it, is an engine greatly in advance of what it supersedes—the distaff—which, till the present moment, is as common in France as it was 200 years ago in England. The spectacle of a country girl carrying home a spinning-wheel from a fair would now be considered an oddity in our own country.

The fair of Beaucaire is of great antiquity, and keeps its ground among many declining usages. Yet it is considered to be falling off, like other assemblages of the kind. Commencing on the 1st of July, it lasts the whole of the month, and attracts 100,000 persons from all surrounding and many distant places to make purchases. The heaviest part of the business is transacted, I was told, two or three days before the fair commences. The day of our visit was almost at the close, yet the bustle was considerable, and without any external appearance of soon abating. When finished, and all trace of the concourse removed, the town subsides into little else than a city of shut and empty houses; and were its fair extinguished, it would speedily fall into a state of neglect and ruin. The advantageous situation of Beaucaire for this great annual market, on the lower part of the Rhône, has been improved by the opening of a canal which leads from the Rhône immediately below the town across the country to the Garonne. On the banks of the canal and of the river, the traffic of barges, from the glance we had of it, seemed to be on an extensive scale.

It being useless to attempt remaining in a town during such a paroxysm of trade, our party gladly took advantage of a steam-boat whose boiler was hissing at the quay, and by it we were carried rapidly down the Rhône towards Arles, which we designed should be our quarters for the night.

In descending the river from Beaucaire, the country on both sides begins to assume the character of a flat and marshy delta. The stream, hitherto impetuous, slackens in its speed, and winds through a region destitute of any object of interest, and in some places the view from the steamer is shut in by clusters of willows which flourish on the banks of the river, and on large flat islands round which the vessel toils its way. At the distance of about twenty-five miles from Beaucaire the river parts in two, a lesser branch going off on the right, called the Petit Rhône, while the larger keeps on its way to Arles, now near at hand. Our approach to the venerable city is indicated by the emerging of certain old gray buildings from behind the willowy bank on our left, and amidst which is observed rearing its gigantic form the ancient Roman amphitheatre, for which Arles has obtained such

distinction. The town generally being situated on a low rocky protuberance, near the summit of which the amphitheatre is placed, the approach from the river is favourable for taking a comprehensive view of the place.

Arles, once the Roman capital of Gaul, and afterwards the chief city of Trans-Jurane Burgundy, is now a poor old provincial town of France; but, possessing an abundance of magnificent ruins, the spectral relics of former glories, it is still impressive in its decay, and commands our respect as well as our commiseration. While Avignon is alone distinguished for the degenerate remains of middle-age architecture, Arles exhibits some of the grandest specimens of the best ages of Rome—magnificent and more perfect than almost anything of the kind in Rome itself.

We spent a day at Arles roaming amidst its ruins; but an antiquary, who did not mind modern discomforts, might well spend a month. That which attracts one the moment he arrives is the amphitheatre. Wending our way through some narrow and crooked alleys, in a direction eastwards from the central Place of the town, we came upon this remarkable edifice, which, by some recent alterations, has been liberated from contiguous and mean buildings, and now stands aloof, surrounded by an iron railing. It is difficult to know how to describe such a vast and curiously constructed mass. Exteriorly, we have before us a gray sandstone structure, oval in form, consisting of two stories of pilasters, with windows or openings, the whole rising from the ground a height of seventy to eighty feet. The lower story is Doric, and the upper of the Corinthian order, and being mostly composed of large blocks of stone, the surface is wonderfully entire. Where time or violence has seriously damaged the pilasters or arched openings, the French government, greatly to its credit, has effected repairs by the introduction of new stones. Neither the large arched openings in the lower story, anciently used as the vomitoires or outlets, nor the openings above, point inwards in a direction parallel with each other. It is remarked that all the arches are concentric—that is, proceed towards the centre of the oval—an arrangement which must have been accomplished with much additional trouble to the planner and builders. Although now liberated, as I have said, from clusters of parasitic edifices, the building is not approachable on every point, for one side rests on an elevated part of the rocky knoll, which mars the general unity of the exterior wall.

The only entrance now in use is at the western extremity, and by this we were admitted through a lofty arched passage to the interior of the structure. Walking forward, we are in the middle of a flat space, the original though partially broken floor of the arena; and around us, from the top of the podium or bounding parapet, to the summit of the outer wall, are seen gradually ascending rows of stone seats. The rows, however, are greatly broken in some places, and in others they are entirely gone, shewing the

ghastly fragments of arches which once supported them. The whole interior area, including the space covered by seats, measures an oval of 459 feet in length, and 338 in breadth, and accommodated 25,000 spectators. There never was any roof. All is open to the sky; but, from poles fixed in the upper part of the outer wall, awnings were drawn across, to shelter the spectators from the sun.

The ascent to the seats was by stone stairs leading from different entrances, and several stairs still remain. The visitor of the ruin, however, gains the top by arched doorways in the podium opening on the arena, through which the wild beasts were wont to be ushered from dens in the interior of the building. We were conducted into these dismal recesses, where were pointed out the dingy vaults in which these ferocious beasts, and also the unfortunate beings whose doom it was to encounter them in the arena, were separately confined. From these gloomy passages we ascended by one of the stairs to a part of the amphitheatre the least decayed. Here, sitting down, we could estimate the imposing scene which the place must have presented when filled with spectators. From the front, or lowest, to the topmost seat, we reckoned, as nearly as possible, thirty rows of stone benches, each from sixteen to eighteen inches broad, by about the same in depth; by which means every block or bench, while serving as a seat for one party, accommodated the feet of the party immediately behind. What seemed a little puzzling, no two rows were alike in dimensions, though quite regular in general aspect. Probably the accommodation was suited in some degree to the different ranks of spectators.

The spot on which we had seated ourselves was in the southern side of the oval, midway from the front to the upper extremity. Here the seats seemed most entire, and we were able to count at least twenty rows together in a nearly undamaged condition. So huge are the square blocks of stone forming the seats, that great violence must have been employed to uplift and destroy them. In all probability, they were abstracted as building materials for the numerous churches and convents which were erected in the town during the middle ages, or for the walls and towers raised in defence of the place.

At present, all cumbrous rubbish being removed, leaving the ruin clear, we are enabled to note with perfect accuracy the internal organisation of the structure. Except, indeed, that large patches of the seats are gone, exposing the tops of the arches which bore them up, everything is much in the state in which it was left by the Romans, although 1500 years have elapsed since they set their foot within it.

It is only, I imagine, by a visit to such a place that one can fully realise an idea of the barbaric amusements of the Roman people. Here the thing is before us, an undoubted substantiality. The stories of gladiators fighting against each other in the arena—

## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

of unhappy Christian captives being set upon by savage beasts of prey—of slaves and malefactors condemned to wrestle in deadly struggle, all for popular amusement, are felt to have been no fictions, but sad realities. From the bench whence we now looked down on the arena, doubtless had been shouted the horrid *hoo habet* which signalled the death-wound of the unfortunate combatant, accompanied by the ominous turning downwards of the thumbs, which bade the conqueror despatch his victim. Realising by a small stretch of fancy the spectacle of such barbaric amusements, a visit to the amphitheatre of Arles likewise affords a vivid notion of the greatness of the Roman people in works of art. Although much smaller than the Coliseum at Rome, the edifice we are now visiting is, nevertheless, on a stupendous scale, and the cost of its erection must have been enormous. It affords a lively illustration of the importance in the Roman state of that privileged class usually called 'the people,' but in reality a burghal aristocracy. Amphitheatres were erected for the amusement of this class in Nîmes, and other places comparatively of a provincial character, and all the entertainments were provided at the public cost. The only restriction consisted in taking the seat which was assigned, and this was regulated by rank and other circumstances. In the front, next the podium, were placed the senators, ambassadors of foreign nations, and also, in a particular seat, the emperor, or his representative the prefect. Next were seats assigned to the judges and ordinary magistrates; these, as well as the seats in front, being provided with cushions. The next higher rows, styled the *popularia*, were of right taken by 'the people;' and the uppermost and most distant benches, like the galleries of modern theatres, were appointed to the inferior orders and slaves.

Not to dwell unnecessarily on these slight illustrations, we may now quit the spot where we have been a few minutes ruminating, and ascend the sloping rows of steps to the top of the building. Here a more commanding view is obtained; but we may go still higher, and look without as well as within the amphitheatre. Conducted by our guide, we were led up a narrow stair to the top of a massive square tower on the outer wall. This tower, which is a comparatively modern excrescence, is matched by another on the opposite side. Both are understood to have been erected about a thousand years ago, when the building was used as a fort either by the Saracenic intruders in this part of France, or by the native powers who expelled them. Other two similar towers—four having been erected—are now gone.

From the lofty situation we had gained, we had a wide and uninterrupted view over the town immediately below us, and of the great marshy plain beyond, which stretched southwards to the Mediterranean, and through which the branches of the Rhône were threading their way amidst groves of willows—the whole a dreary flat, whence the heat of the sun was raising an unwholesome mist. On descending to the arena, we looked round for



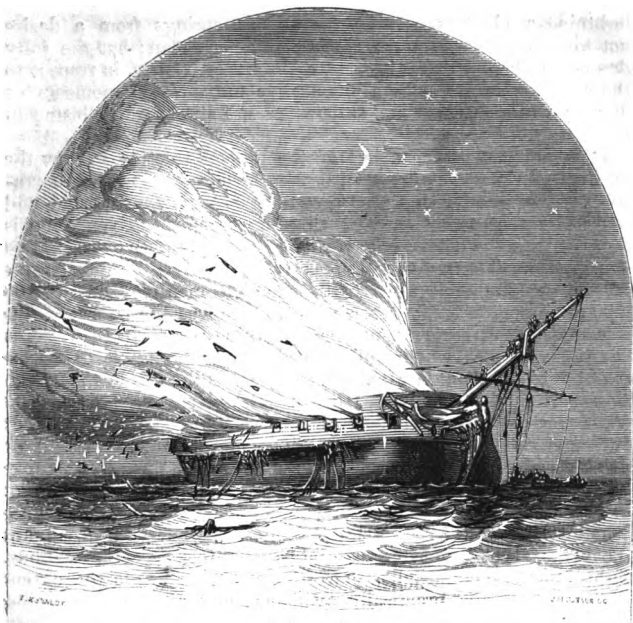
## TOUR IN AUVERGNE.

some kind of inscription, but were not more successful in the search than hosts of antiquaries who had gone before us. Faint traces of characters are alone visible on the broken marble slabs which face the podium. It is understood that the building was erected in the reign of the Emperor Titus, nearly 1800 years ago.

Our next visit was to a singularly beautiful relic of art, which has lately been exposed to view at a short distance from the amphitheatre, on ground a little more elevated. This is the fragment of a Roman theatre, which had for centuries been partly buried in rubbish, and partly engrossed in some mean domestic structures. The principal objects now standing exposed in the midst of the excavation are two marble columns of the Corinthian order, surmounted by a portion of elegant entablature. These had formed pillars of the scene, others for a similar purpose being destroyed, and lying in pieces on the ground. Part of the flight of stone seats for the audience is also entire, with some portions of walls used for the orchestra and the support of the stage.

After visiting some other antiquities in Arles, we embarked in a steamer on the Rhône, and ascended to Beaucaire, whence we took a railway-train to Nîmes. Here the remains of a Roman amphitheatre, fully more complete than that at Arles, engaged our attention. The whole town and neighbourhood abound in relics of antiquity of a stupendous class. The sight of one object, the Pont du Gard, being the remains of a Roman aqueduct across the river Gard, alone repaid us for much discomfort in travelling through the hot lime-dust region of Southern France. It is situated on the road from Nîmes to Avignon; the highway being carried along a modern bridge attached to the ancient structure. Having, as we thought, done ample justice to these interesting classical memorials, we returned up the Rhône, and in due time arrived safely in Paris.





## SHIPWRECKS.

'Ye gentlemen of England who live at home at ease,  
How little do you think upon the dangers of the seas.'

**T**HIS, like many other sing-song statements or implications, is not quite true. The gentlemen who live at home at ease *do* think frequently of those dangers, and they do that which seamen too often neglect—they try to devise means for warding off or lessening them. Sailors are a peculiar class of men; they have a sort of Mohammedan fatalism about them which gives them a dislike to talk of impending perils, and somewhat paralyses their preventive measures. Captains and seamen are annoyed at any questions about danger put to them by passengers; and they would rather hide than exhibit such things as life-buoys and life-boats, and

## SHIPWRECKS.

lightning-conductors. In so far as this springs from a desire not to foster nervous terror, it is a judicious plan; but the jolly tars cannot be quite acquitted of a little recklessness, in respect to the adoption of preventive or curative measures in moments of wreck; while shippers and shipowners are still more to blame in the matter.

It is no part of the object of the present tract to harrow the feelings of the reader by a successive series of shipwreck narratives. The taste for that class of reading is somewhat morbid, and requires rather to be checked than encouraged. Every one is familiar with the details of a greater or lesser number of celebrated shipwrecks. There was the wreck of the *Méduse* French frigate off the coast of Senegal in 1816, when 140 men died out of 150 who attempted to escape on a raft. There was the wreck of the *Alceste* British frigate among the Philippine Islands in 1817, when the crew were so wonderfully saved by the admirable discipline maintained by Captain Maxwell. There was the loss of the *Royal George* at Spithhead in 1782, when Admiral Kempenfeldt and 900 other persons were drowned. There was the loss of the *Kent* Indianman, and the miserable sufferings of the crew. Instead of dwelling on such calamities as these, we think it may be more useful to connect the details in some way with a description of various means of rescue or prevention, now available to 'those who go down to the sea in ships.' Life-boats, life-buoys, buoyant garments, boat-lowering apparatus, life-rockets, cliff wagons, lightning-conductors—all are worthy of our notice, to the extent that they become practically available; and all are undergoing gradual improvement. If we give a few shipwreck narratives, they will be associated in some way with the want of these provisions.

Among the lamentable proofs that large steamers are no more exempt than sailing vessels from the perils of the sea, is that afforded by the wreck of the *Queen Victoria* steamer, just as she was reaching the end of her voyage from Liverpool to Dublin. This sad event occurred in February 1853. The steamer arrived within sight of the light-house at Howth in the dead of the night, with 120 persons on board. There are two light-houses at Howth; but a thick fall of snow obscured the view; and under a feeling of doubt concerning the identity of one which was visible, the officers ran on towards shore at a higher speed than was prudent, and the ship struck with fearful violence. The passengers, some of whom were in bed, were roused in the wildest confusion; and one of those heart-rending scenes ensued which we are unwilling to dilate upon. Nearly seventy persons were drowned. The starboard-quarter boat was speedily laden with people; but from some ill contrivance or management of the suspension ropes, the boat tilted over, and all on board perished. The larboard-quarter boat was then laden and lowered, and this would have been swamped also, for a plug-hole had been left

## SHIPWRECKS.

open; but a lad on board thrust a finger into the hole, and kept it there until the boat safely reached the shore. In this, as in too many other cases, the boats and their tackle were ill fitted for the services required of them—a matter on which we shall say more presently.

If we needed proof that the finest ships, and vicinage to our steam-ship basins, are no bars to the wrecking power of a high sea, the sad disaster of the *Duke of Sutherland* would furnish proof indeed. This vessel, as many of our readers will well recollect, plied to and fro between London and Aberdeen, with speed and regularity; it was built of iron, and was furnished conveniently and elegantly. On the 1st of April 1853, the steamer arrived at the harbour of Aberdeen, after a successful voyage from London, bringing twenty-eight crew and twenty-four passengers. She arrived in broad daylight; but as the harbour of Aberdeen is difficult for ships coming from the south, she waited outside or off the harbour until a signal was given that the state of the tide permitted her to enter. A heavy flood from the river Dee, and a stiff breeze from the south, baffled the captain in his endeavour to enter at the right point, and the hapless ship struck with tremendous force against some rocks lying seaward at the head of the pier. Turning broadside on to the waves, the steamer lay a helpless log on the water. In a few minutes, the pier was crowded with thousands of spectators, some of whom reached within a very few yards of the vessel. She had grounded midships, and being built of iron, she began to break up within ten minutes after having struck. Several of the crew lowered one of the paddle-box boats, got into it, were capsized, and were pulled ashore one by one by the spectators. A life-boat, meanwhile, went out to the sinking ship, but could not get close to it on account of its swaying so fearfully to and fro. The wretched passengers endeavoured to jump from the ship into the boat; some fell into the sea and were drowned, some jumped into the boat and were brought to land. The boat tried to make a second venture, but was beaten back by the waves and surf. A fishing-boat next tried to render aid, but the terrible sea swamped it, and seven additional lives were sacrificed. One of Captain Manby's machines (described in a later page) being near at hand, it was hauled out; and after a few failures, a rope was shot athwart the yet remaining portion of the poor ship, and most of those still on board were rescued. No persons are believed to have been actually drowned in the ship itself, but many lost their lives in the varied attempts to reach the shore. Much comment was made at the time on the insufficiency of the various life-preserving contrivances at Aberdeen, and on the want of heroism displayed by most of the crew; but this is a matter on which we will not touch. No one can tell, unless he has shared the calamity, how the mind becomes unhinged in a moment of sudden danger, and how cool determination becomes overturned.

## SHIPWRECKS.

The statistics of our shipwrecks are startling, far beyond what most persons would imagine. During the year 1850, there were 692 vessels, of 127,188 tons burden, wrecked belonging to Great Britain, or nearly two per day; of these, only four were steamers. The number 692 relates to British vessels wrecked in every part of the world; but if we change the point of view, and consider the vessels of all countries which were wrecked on the British coasts, we find the number to be 681. Of these, 277 were total wrecks; 84 were sunk by leaks or collisions; 16 were abandoned; and 304 were so stranded and damaged as to require them to discharge cargo. About 780 lives were lost in these wrecks. The sad story differed very little from this in 1851. There were in that year 701 vessels wrecked on the British coasts, involving a loss of 750 lives—351 were total wrecks; and 153 of the wrecks occurred in the month of September alone, which happened to be very stormy. The year 1852 gave a still worse account. There were no less than 1100 wrecks, and 900 lives lost. The three years 1850-1-2 present, then, this gloomy picture—that in 1095 days there were 2482 ships wrecked within the British seas, and 2430 lives lost by these wrecks: more than two ships and two lives every average day throughout the three years. Nor do the numbers for 1853 afford any room for congratulation. The busy scenes of our ports, owing to the Australian excitement and other causes, have been quite unexampled, and have been accompanied by a full measure of calamities.

Some particular gales have strewed our coasts with wrecks. On the 31st August and 1st September 1833, 61 British vessels were lost on the sands in the North Sea and on the east coast of England. In the gale of 13th January 1843, no less than 103 vessels were wrecked on the coasts of the United Kingdom. In the gales of 1846, as many as 39 vessels got ashore in Hartlepool Bay alone. In the single month of March 1850, not less than 134 vessels were wrecked on our coasts. In September 1851, the monthly number was increased to 153, or more than five a day. But all this was fearfully excelled by the catastrophes of October and November 1852; within thirty days, 300 vessels were lost or damaged on our coasts, with a loss of 217 lives. If we take collisions and slight accidents into account, the numbers are much higher. In 1851, a parliamentary paper was published, giving a list of all the wrecks, accidents, and collisions recorded on the books at Lloyd's during the four years 1847-48-49-50: four years of calamities to British ships on the high seas and on maritime coasts. What a list it is, occupying 193 folio pages! The number considerably exceeds 13,000—not, of course, all shipwrecks; but an aggregate of wrecks, collisions, and other accidents, of which, however, two-thirds may be regarded as of a serious character. If distributed equally, they would amount to nine per day, or one in less than three hours—a ratio certainly deserving of national attention. The tremendous snow-storm, preceded and followed

## SHIPWRECKS.

by high wind, in the first week or two of 1854, produced a most lamentable loss of life and property on our eastern coast.

After all that may be and has been said, shipwrecks partake more of the character of *moral* events than we are generally in the habit of supposing. Captain Fitzroy, who was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1843, used the following remarkable words :—‘I think the principal cause of the losses of British ships has been the neglect or incompetency of those in command of them. It is very rarely that any vessel is lost except in consequence of neglect or mismanagement. In saying neglect, I mean not attending sufficiently to the position of the ship, to heaving the lead, to taking all those precautions which ought to be taken by a good seaman anxious for the safety of his ship, and knowing how to take care of her; and incompetency from not knowing how to make proper observations for ascertaining the ship’s place, and not being practical seamen acquainted with their duty, and not having had sufficient experience either as masters or mates of merchant ships to entitle them to take under their charge not only the ship and cargo, but the lives of all who are embarked on board.’ The education of nautical men has occupied a good deal of attention, both from the government and the legislature, in the ten years which have elapsed since Captain Fitzroy made these observations; and we believe there is ground for the opinion, that captains, masters, and mates, are becoming more competent and sober men than they were some years ago.

Many shipwrecks illustrate, or rather serve as warnings against, a laxity of watch when approaching an island or coast. Such, so far as seems to be known, was the case with the *Meridian*, wrecked on the island of Amsterdam on the 24th of August 1853. The *Meridian* left Gravesend for Australia on the 4th of June, with a crew of twenty-three persons, a large cargo of merchandise, and eighty-four passengers. We have spoken above of a laxity of watch; but if the accounts be correct, there was something more than this, for, a few hours before the wrecking, the *Meridian* passed another vessel bound for Sydney, and the captain, wishing to maintain his advantage, was induced to steer in such a way as to run too close to the island of Amsterdam. The weather was boisterous, and the shock occurred when the crew seemed to have imagined the vessel to be some miles distant from the island. On looking out it was found that the ship had struck on a reef of rocks, about a quarter of a mile from the island of Amsterdam; and shortly afterwards she was driven from the reef right upon the desolate and inhospitable shore of the island. At the first crash, the stern posts and rudder were washed from their places, admitting the water into the hinder part of the vessel; but this proved a source of safety to the passengers; for many tons of water poured into the cabins through the broken sky-lights on deck, and this water, instead of drowning the persons who were cooped up in the cabins, found an exit through the

## SHIPWRECKS.

fractured shell of the poor ship. The second-class passengers, who had scarcely time to get out of their cabin—the water suddenly rising between decks up to the neck—were brought into the cuddy, where the whole of the passengers passed a wretched night, of eight or nine hours' duration. About the middle of the night, the vessel parted in two; the hinder half, containing the passengers, being separated from the front half. As soon as daylight appeared, the passengers prepared to leave the vessel: the main-mast had fallen so as to form a sort of bridge from the cuddy door to the shore, and along this formidable bridge they scrambled to the island.

One very special cause of shipwreck is the existence of icebergs floating about in the North Atlantic. It is difficult to see how human foresight can avoid these, except by taking a more southerly route altogether. The following is one among many examples of disaster so occasioned:—On the 10th of May 1849, the *Maria* was sailing from Limerick to Canada, with a crew of 10 hands and 111 emigrants. She seems to have been an old vessel, and was very probably unseaworthy, like too many other emigrant ships. When about fifty miles from the American coast, she ran into an iceberg with terrific force. The whole of her bows were stove in, and the next moment the sea was rushing into the hold with the violence almost of a cataract. A piercing shriek was heard from below, but it was only of a moment's duration, as the ship went down almost immediately. It being the mate's watch, he, with one seaman and a cabin-boy, succeeded in saving their lives by one of the boats which floated from the wreck as she foundered. About twenty of the passengers managed to reach the deck just before she went down, some of whom jumped on to the ice, while others clung to the floating spars. Nine only, however, could be preserved, together with two women and a boy, who had got on to the ice. Nothing was seen of the master or the rest of the crew; they all perished with the remainder of the passengers. Exposed in the boat to the most inclement weather, the survivors remained the whole of the next day, until relieved by a passing ship.

Some of the calamities on shipboard must be attributed, it is evident, to a want of due proportion in the various parts of the vessel. Such, in the opinion of many persons, must have been the case in respect to the *Dalhousie*, wrecked off Beachy Head on the 18th of October 1853. The *Dalhousie* was a fine Indian teak-built ship, of 800 tons, launched at Moulmein in 1848. She became one of the 'White Horse' line of Australian passenger ships. Happily, as matters turned out, the passengers on the intended voyage in question were very few in number; but the freight was valuable, and the crew consisted of sixty-one persons. A steam-tug towed the vessel down from London to the Downs, where, after a brief shelter from a rough sea, she set sail, and passed Dungeness on the way towards Beachy Head. About four

## SHIPWRECKS.

in the morning, when Beachy Head Light-house appeared about eight or ten miles distant, the man at the wheel observed that the ship began to lurch deeply, going a long way over on her broad-side, and being scarcely able to recover herself after a roll. Shortly afterwards, the starboard-quarter boat was carried away by a sea; and at about five o'clock, the crew commenced throwing overboard water-casks, sheep-pens, and other lumber. While this was going on, the ship gave a violent lurch to starboard, and a heavy sea at the time going over her, washed away the long-boat. The weather was then getting worse. The ship continued to lurch violently, and at half-past five she rolled right over on her starboard beam-ends, and remained in that position with her mast-head in the water, lying at the mercy of the sea, which then made a clear breach over her, and washed away the larboard-quarter boat. A great many of the crew took refuge in the maintop; while Joseph Reed, the seaman at the helm, and the only survivor of the catastrophe, got outside the ship on the weather-quarter gallery. To stand on deck was an impossibility. Captain Butterworth, the commander of the vessel, together with the chief and second mate, the carpenter, the cook, and some of the crew, dragged through the gallery window four passengers. Reed and another seaman succeeded in getting out of the water a young lady who had come out of one of the poop-cabins; they lashed her to a large spar, and placed her with the rest of her party on the gallery. Immediately afterwards, an enormous wave broke over the ship, and washed off a gentleman, his wife, and their four children—all of whom at once found a watery grave. As it was evident that the ship could not remain afloat many minutes longer, Joseph Reed cut the lashings of the spar to which the young lady had been made fast, in order to give her a chance for her life; but as the spar went adrift, the captain, one of the mates, and one or two seamen proceeded to cling to it; and in a brief space of time the whole were washed away and drowned. At the time when the hapless *Dalhousie* actually went down, Reed was standing with the cook and the carpenter on the quarter, and a few others were holding on to different parts of the wreck. As the ship sank lower and lower, Reed and the surgeon climbed one of the masts higher and higher, until they reached the top; and when the top finally sank, Reed swam off to some planks near him. Hour after hour passed; poor Reed was repeatedly washed off his plank, but as repeatedly gained his position again: he saw many vessels pass each way, but received no aid from them—he being an almost invisible speck upon the water. He saw his companions drop off one by one from the floating fragments to which they had clung, and sink to rise no more. At length, about four in the afternoon, he was observed by the crew of a brig, who picked him up, and landed him safely at Dover. Reed believed that he was the only living being who escaped the wreck: he had been ten hours on his frail bit of



## SHIPWRECKS.

wood, and had been washed off at least a dozen times. There was much newspaper narrative at the time concerning the remarkable escape of many persons who had taken their places by the *Dalhousie*, but had preferred going on board at Plymouth; and concerning the conduct of the crew of a schooner, who, it is alleged, might have aided the hapless ship, if so minded. But these are matters on which we need not comment; it concerns us only to know that the catastrophe is by many persons attributed to the vessel being top-heavy, and also crank, from the stowage or shifting of the cargo. It is an opinion entertained, that if Captain Butterworth had cut away the masts while the ship remained on her beam-ends, both vessel and crew might perchance have been saved, since there does not appear to have been any rent in the bottom.

But let us now proceed with our more immediate subject, taking up first the life-boat question.

The first life-boat, professedly intended as such, was built in 1790. In September of the preceding year, the *Adventure* collier was wrecked near the mouth of the Tyne; the crew were seen to drop from the rigging, and perish in presence of thousands of spectators, who watched them from the shore, but could render no assistance. The mournful event made a great impression in the neighbourhood, and a committee soon afterwards offered a reward for the best model of a life-boat. The prize was awarded to Henry Greathead, a boat-builder of South Shields. The boat which he made, in conformity with his plan, was 30 feet long, 20 feet in length of keel, 10 feet broad,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  outside depth at the waist, and  $5\frac{1}{4}$  feet high at each end. It was like a steamer's paddle-box boat, with stem and stern alike. There was a thick cork lining running along the upper part of the interior of the boat, and a cork fender on the outside. The boat was very buoyant when in its right position; but it had no means of freeing itself from water, nor of righting itself if upset. From 1790 to 1798 this was the only life-boat; but it saved, during this interval, the lives of six wrecked crews, and the inventor received rewards from parliament, from the Trinity House, and from Lloyd's. In 1798, Greathead built a second life-boat, which the Duke of Northumberland stationed at North Shields; and by the year 1803, he had built upwards of thirty.

Ship-builders, boat-builders, seamen, mechanics, amateur inventors—all from time to time made new life-boats. If ingenious novelties could save endangered seamen from destruction, we should surely hear very little of shipwreck. It would hardly be credited, except by persons who have watched the progress of mechanical invention, how numerous are the boats which have been contrived as safeguards against drowning. We have said that Mr Greathead's was the first real life-boat; but it was not the first boat intended for some such purpose. He was preceded by a Mr Lukin in the construction of a boat rendered buoyant by air-tight cases; and

## SHIPWRECKS.

he has been followed by a string of inventors so numerous as to defy all calculation. In the year 1807, the Society of Arts gave a prize-medal to Mr Wilson for the invention of a life-boat, the chief peculiarity of which consisted in having the air-cases separated and isolated, insomuch that the disrapture of any one might not affect the others. One inventor after another put forth new inventions for life-boats, often ignorant of each other's doings, but in most instances depending on the use of cork or of air-tight cases. When the era of India-rubber and gutta-percha commenced, a new field for the exercise of ingenuity was found, by the employment of these materials in boats. Mr Macintosh, in 1839, suggested the employment of a sheet of India-rubber cloth, so sewn as to assume somewhat a boat shape, and having air-tubes at its edges to form buoyant gunwales; this was not actually a boat, but an apology for a boat, available on emergencies. Mr Salt, in 1841, brought another agent to work—the paddle; he proposed that a life-boat, ballasted with water, which could be let in or out at pleasure, should be provided with paddles worked by hand. Mr Holcroft's pontoon or safety-boat was so curiously formed of a framework covered with India-rubber cloth, that although forming a convenient boat when open, it could be folded up flat like a portfolio into one-sixth of its former bulk. Dr Patterson contrived a boat with a bottom so constructed, that any water which washed into it might find an exit through valvular openings. Captain Smith's paddle-box boats, for steamers, were not recommended so much for any peculiarities of construction, as for their adaptation to the tops of paddle-boxes, which they could be easily turned over and lowered to the sea. When Lady Franklin fitted out an expedition in search of the gallant old man who left our shores eight years ago, Captain Forsyth, who commanded it, took out with him a gutta-percha boat, or rather, a boat having a skeleton of wood and a covering of India-rubber. The boat behaved so well, that he gave the appropriate name of Gutta-percha Inlet to a place which he discovered with its aid: it bore all the bumps and thumps of the huge blocks of ice, and the sharp cutting action of the smaller pieces; and, in short, it got over difficulties which no other material could probably have surmounted. This success has led to the employment of gutta-percha in many of the experimental life-boats produced within the last few years.

When the wonders of the Crystal Palace were attracting all eyes, persons could scarcely understand how or why so many models of boats made their appearance. Fifty-four models of life-boats, by fifty-four inventors, were sent by one committee or society alone; while a large number were sent by other persons. One of them excited almost as much amusement as if it had been a joke instead of a sober stern reality. It had as many deep circular boxes, and as many covers to them, as it was calculated to carry persons; and we could never look at that strange array of boxes, without thinking of the oil-jars in which Morgiana put the

## SHIPWRECKS.

Forty Thieves. But we must proceed to notice the circumstances under which life-boat projects became so popular in 1853.

During 1849 and 1850, one life-boat was upset and all the crew drowned; many of the life-boats had been unable to reach the wrecked vessels; many others were in a very defective state; many dangerous parts of the coast were unprovided with them of any kind; and there were defective arrangements for manning many of those which did exist. Under these circumstances, the Duke of Northumberland, in October 1850, offered a prize of 100 guineas for the best model of a life-boat. It was stated in the advertisement, that the chief defects found in the then existing life-boats were—a deficient power in self-righting, deficient means of emptying when flooded with water, and too great weight for transporting along shore; these matters being attended to, the competitors were left uncontrolled in all that concerned form, construction, and fittings. No fewer than 280 models and plans were sent in for competition; and the arbitrators or judges commenced their somewhat formidable task. These judges were five in number: Captain Washington; Mr Watts, assistant-surveyor of the navy; Mr Fincham, master-shipwright at Portsmouth; Commander Jerningham; and Mr Peake, assistant master-shipwright at Woolwich. Sir Baldwin Walker, surveyor of the navy, also gave the decision and report his approval.

The system on which the judges sought to compare the several schemes was a remarkable one, resembling somewhat the mode in which a scientific man calculates each separate force, in order to arrive at the total or resultant force, in astronomy and dynamics. They first put to themselves this question—what are the required qualities in a good life-boat? They got up a list of fifteen qualities; namely—good in rowing; good in sailing; good in launching through a surf; small internal capacity for water; easy riddance of the water; special means of buoyancy; power of self-righting; aptness at beaching; roominess for passengers; lightness for transport along shore; protection of the bottom from injury; nature of the ballast; access to stem or stern; facilities for attaching ropes, &c.; and arrangement of fenders, &c. They next sought to determine which of these numerous qualities is the most indispensable, the most valuable; and they resolved to attach a high number or numerical figure to that particular quality, reserving lower numbers for qualities a little less important than this; insomuch that each quality should have its numerical figure or representative. In the next place, it was determined that *every* model should be examined in respect to *every* quality, with a view of settling its position among its compeers step by step.

This plan of operation being agreed to, the examination commenced. It was found that, in the general principles of construction, every model might be placed in one or other of five groups. Thus, there were several models in the form of pontoons; catamarans or rafts formed a second group; a third group had for its

## SHIPWRECKS.

type a troop-boat or steamer's paddle-box boat; a fourth more nearly resembled the north-country coble; while a fifth group was composed of the ordinary boats in everyday use, slightly modified, according to the nature of the coast for which they were intended. The award of the prize was not, however, to depend on a preference for any one of these groups over the others, but on the whole of the fifteen qualities before adverted to. It was agreed that power as a rowing-boat in all weathers should be ranked as the highest quality, that this should be called No. 20, and that the best model in respect to this quality should have 20 attached to its name. It was next agreed that efficient power as a sailing-boat should be ranked second, that this should be called 18, and that the best among the 280 models as a sailing-boat should have 18 attached to its name. So they proceeded; examining all the models successively in respect to some one quality, determining the order of excellence in respect to that one quality, and then proceeding to another. There were, in effect, fifteen prizes to be competed for by 280 persons; and he who obtained the greatest number of these prizes, or rather the highest aggregate of numerical figures, was to win the ultimate reward. There was considerable ingenuity shewn in the concoction of this plan: whether the valuation of the separate items was correct, can be determined only by practical men. The total value of all the good qualities was represented by 100; each quality had a conventional percentage of this amount; and the competitor whose percentages amounted to the largest aggregate, was to be awarded the prize.

When all the models and plans had been examined in respect to all the different qualities, the numbers or prizes were added up; and the highest was found to be attached to the name of Mr Beeching of Yarmouth. This number was 84, implying 84 per cent. of good qualities; his boat had all the good qualities to which the highest numbers had been attached. His nearest competitors obtained the numbers 78, 75, 72, and 70. The reward of 100 guineas was hence paid to Mr Beeching.

It would be tedious to describe any considerable number of these boats; but a few words may consistently be said relating to that one which gained the prize. The body of the boat is shaped something like a whale-boat. The extreme length is 36 feet; length of keel, 31; breadth of beam,  $9\frac{1}{2}$ ; depth,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ ; depth of keel, 8 inches: it is worked by twelve oars, double-banked. It has buoyancy given to it by cork and air; the cork, 6 inches wide by 8 inches deep, runs round the outside of the boat; the air is contained in cases, placed in various parts of the boat. It has ballast given to it by water and iron; the water,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons in weight, is placed in a flat tank in the bottom of the boat; the iron, 10 hundredweights, is in the form of a keel. As a means of freeing the boat from water, there are twelve tubes conveniently placed. The total weight, with all its gear, is 67 hundredweights; and it will carry seventy persons in all.

## SHIPWRECKS.

The committee or judges did not confine themselves simply to the making of this award. They gave descriptions of about thirty of the competing boats, they prepared drawings for fourteen engraved plates, they made lengthened comments and suggestions on the whole subject of life-boats, and gave many narratives and statistics relating to shipwrecks. The drawings and manuscript descriptions they caused to be bound up in five folio volumes, for future reference. When they had delivered in their report to the Duke of Northumberland, his Grace caused it, with all its appended plates and documents, to be printed, for private circulation, in a handsome folio volume. The whole transaction was conducted in a munificent spirit, and it will be hard indeed if good results do not attend the endeavour. Besides giving fair-play to all the competitors, the committee requested one of their number, Mr Peake, to suggest a form of life-boat which should combine the good qualities of many of the others: he did so; and the Admiralty caused a boat to be built on his plan at Woolwich.

It has not been left simply to individuals to lay plans for relieving wrecked ships. Associations—which in England effect so many of those objects done on the continent by governments—have taken up the cause of humanity in this direction. These efforts deserve a page or two of notice.

The Shipwreck Institution, or, to give it its full name, the 'Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck,' was founded in 1824. It grants funds in aid of building life-boat houses, of providing life-boats and other safety apparatus, and of making models for the use of constructors; it assists, by funds and advice, in training boatmen and coast-guardmen to the use of the various kinds of apparatus; it gives and receives the fullest available information concerning shipwrecks and shipwreck prevention; and it rewards meritorious services by votes of thanks, by sums of money, and by award of medals. The committee of the Institution meet once a month, to transact the requisite business. Between 1824 and 1851, they awarded 77 gold medals, 500 silver medals, and gratuities to the amount of L.8457, for services connected with the objects of the Institution. These medals and rewards were given to persons who had been instrumental in saving no less than 7378 lives, exclusive of the crews of several vessels, the numbers of which were not ascertained. By the end of 1852, these numbers had risen to—78 gold, and 523 silver medals awarded, L.8790 granted as rewards, and 8153 lives saved, exclusive of several unascertained numbers of crews saved. It is a great thing to say, and one that tells much for the usefulness of the Institution, that during the year 1852, no less than 773 lives were saved by persons who became recipients of the society's rewards.

The society are either actually possessors of, or have control over, a considerable number of life-boats and boat-houses. This number amounted, in April 1853, to thirty-four life-boats and

## SHIPWRECKS.

thirty-two boat-houses. The expense had been borne in one case by the Admiralty, in three cases by the Duke of Northumberland, in many cases by local subscriptions, but in the majority by the parent institution. The boats thus belonging to or controlled by the Institution, vary from 17 to 32 feet in length, from 6 to 9 feet in breadth, from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  feet in depth, from 18 to 53 hundred-weights, from five to twelve in number of oars, and from L.60 to L.200 in expense. If we strike an average among all these numbers, we may give the following as something like a general representative of an English life-boat:—24 feet long,  $7\frac{1}{4}$  feet wide, 8 feet deep, 30 hundredweights, eight oars, L.120 cost. The weight of an average life-boat being thus  $1\frac{1}{4}$  tons, the conveyance from place to place along the coast, the launching from its boat-house into the water, and the re-housing when not in use, are matters of considerable importance; and all the prizes and commendations have had relation to this as well as to other services which life-boat apparatus is expected to render.

It may be interesting to describe the regulations determined on by the Shipwreck Institution for the management of a life-boat, and the station at which it is deposited. These relate, in the first place, to the stores, and in the second place, to the men; or, if the convenient French terms might be used, the *matériel* and the *personnel*.

First, for the *matériel*. Besides the life-boat itself, there must be provided the following adjuncts:—an anchor and cable; a grapnel 25 poundweights, to retain the boat for awhile near the wreck; a spring for the cable; a boat's painter; a set and a half of short fir-oars; two steering sweep-oars; three boat-hooks; a hand-grapnel, with heaving-line; a sharp axe and two small sharp hatchets, stowed in appointed places in the boat; two life-buoys, with lines attached; short knotted life-lines to hang over the side; a boat binnacle and compass; a lamp kept trimmed; a supply of oil and matches; a spy-glass; a lantern; a fisherman's white light or port-fire; hand-rockets for throwing a line to the wreck; a sounding lead and line; a cork life-belt for each of the crew; a vessel of fresh water, and a drinking-cup; various tools and minor stores; and a few articles, the nautical names of which would not be understood by readers generally. Such are the boat's contents.

Next for the *personnel*. Each boat's crew consists of a cockswain-superintendent, a second cockswain, and the rowers. There are twice as many men enrolled for each boat as are required for one crew, to be prepared for exigencies. The enrolled men consist of sailors, fishermen, and coast-guardmen. The captain, or cockswain-superintendent, receives a small yearly salary, and all the men receive certain gratuities every time they go out either to exercise the life-boat or to render service. There is a local committee at each life-boat station; and from this committee the crew receive guiding orders, one of which is, that exercise shall be

## SHIPWRECKS.

taken with the boat at intervals in rough blowing weather. The local committee reports to the Shipwreck Institution, occasionally, concerning the state of the gear and the conduct of the men. Full instructions are given to the cockswain for the management of his boat and crew in time of service: the boat is always to be kept on its carriage in the boat-house; there are to be three keys to the boat-house, that the missing of any one may not cause delay; the cockswain is to assemble his crew by flag-signal during the day, and rocket-signal during the night; if he can reach the distressed vessel, he is to attend only to the preservation of life, disregarding luggage, merchandise, and everything else; he is to keep a watch on the weather, and make partial preparations for usefulness whenever a storm seems brewing; and he is to familiarise himself with the methods adopted by the Royal Humane Society for the recovery of persons apparently drowned.

The Institution has a journal to aid its cause. The humble periodical called the *Life-boat* has been founded with such a laudable object, that we cannot do better than say a word in its favour. The first number appeared in March 1852—an octavo sheet of sixteen pages, at a charge of 1½d. Five numbers were published at monthly intervals; but in September—either because the supply of materials was small, or because the demand for the work was small, or both—the plan of publication was changed: it was determined to publish at longer intervals, to give twenty-four pages in each number, and to charge 2d. Five numbers have been published on this later plan—down to about the commencement of the year 1854. The report of the Northumberland life-boat committee appears to have suggested the idea of this little work; a new interest had been awakened, and it was wished to keep it awake. The desire is, to bring the work within the scope of boatmen, fishermen, and sailors, and to induce them to read it. It is to tell them all about new life-boats, new line-rockets, new boat-stations; narratives of shipwrecks (the events to be prevented); examples of heroic gallantry among life-boatmen (the means of prevention); the proceedings of the Shipwreck Society; the establishment and proceedings of local societies in connection with it; the award of medals for distinguished services; and voluntary correspondence on all these topics. It thus becomes a journal of the society itself, and also a magazine of interesting gossip relating to such matters as the society takes under its cognizance. The work is, of course, somewhat gloomy and painful in its character, as judged by ordinary standards; but the very object in view prevents it from being otherwise; and it may be that those who live near our coasts, and witness such sad disasters among shipping, may forget the gloom of the book in the brightness of the attempts to alleviate the miseries on the sea-board.

A dash of disappointment has been given to the life-boat committee by the fact, that a boat built by the successful competitor has since been overturned, and the crew drowned. Whether the

boat was actually built in conformity with the model, and whether blame rested chiefly with the builder or with the hapless boatmen, are questions which have given rise to much controversy; we will not offer an opinion on these matters; but it is evident there is much yet to be done among life-boat contrivances.

Who can fail to see that life-boat enterprises call forth the best energies of a man's mind—to do good to others? What the men undergo is frequently terrible: raging storms, fearful darkness, crashing thunder, destructive lightning, howling winds, wet, cold, fatigue—all have to be borne, and all are borne in a brave spirit. As to the pittance they receive, it is quite insignificant; and on this account, they ought the more to receive public commendation for the services rendered. The life-boat is, indeed, the symbol of heroism, and is connected with the names of many daring and courageous men. The late Sir William Hillery, of the Isle of Man, was as fully a life-boat hero as Wilberforce was an anti-slavery hero. Sir William went to reside in the Isle of Man in 1808, and soon had gloomy evidence of the frequency of wrecks on the coasts of that island. After many years, he sought to organise some definite system for the aid of wrecked vessels; and he was the first proposer of the Shipwreck Institution. When that had been established, he set about the formation of a local committee among the Manxmen. By the year 1829, four life-boats were stationed at the four harbours of the island; and Sir William fully shared with the crews in their humane but hazardous achievements. In 1825, he aided in saving sixty-two lives from the wrecked steamer *City of Glasgow*; in the same year, he and his men saved eleven persons from the *Leopard* brig, and nine from the *Fancy* sloop; in 1827, he lent similar aid in saving seventeen from the *Fortroindet* Swedish bark; in 1830, seven from the *Eclipse* sloop, five from the *Fancy* sloop, nine from the *Anne* sloop, and twenty-two from the *St George* mail-steamer; and in 1832, no less than fifty-four from the *Parkfield* merchant-ship. In all these cases, Sir William went out in the Douglas life-boat, and on one of the occasions he had six ribs fractured. One of these exploits was very exciting, as the reader will immediately see. On the 29th November 1830, the steamer *St George* struck on St Mary's Rock, near the Douglas coast of the Isle of Man. The captain cut away the main-mast, in hopes to make a raft which would save the crew; but in this he failed, and he then made signals of distress. Sir William Hillery made one in a party of eighteen men who immediately set off in a life-boat to the ill-fated ship. The attempt to reach the ship was rendered so dangerous by the tremendous surf near the rock, that the rudder of the life-boat was beaten off. Six oars were broken or lost, some of the air-tight cases were injured, and Sir William and three other persons were washed overboard. These four were saved, at the expense of fractures and bruises; but the life-boat had by this time become helplessly jammed in between the wreck, the fallen mast and



rigging, and the rock. The twenty-two crew of the ship joined the eighteen crew of the boat, and the whole forty were for two or three hours at the mercy of the waves, for the boat was by this time nearly unmanageable. At length a huge sea fairly drove the boat out of its mesh of difficulty, to a spot so near the shore that other boats could come to its assistance. The whole of the forty men safely reached dry land.

Others have not been so fortunate as this crew. The life-boatmen of Shields, at the mouth of the Tyne, look back with great regret to an accident which occurred on the 4th of December 1849; because, independent of the sad loss of life, it broke the chain of success which had so signally attended their endeavours. This success has been more marked near the mouth of the Tyne than at any other part of the coast. In the nine years 1842-50, there were 466 persons saved from sixty-two vessels stranded near the entrance of that river, by the resolute services of the life-boatmen. On the day above named, a salt-laden ship called the *Betsy* was stranded on a shoal near the river's mouth; and although the state of the tide and the sea was very unfavourable, a life-boat, manned with twenty-four pilots, immediately went out to her assistance. Two ropes were fastened from the ship to the boat, and the ship's company were about to descend into the latter, when a furious wave tilted up the boat at one end, broke one of the two ropes, hurled the crew to the other end of the boat, and then upset, consigning to a watery grave twenty of the twenty-four brave men on board. The whole of these distressing events were seen from the shore; a second life-boat was sent off, which picked up the remainder of their poor brethren; while a third life-boat saved the whole crew of the ship.

The beautiful episode furnished by the life of Grace Darling is intimately connected with the present subject, although the boat in which she achieved her noble enterprise was not professedly a life-boat. Her story is so well known, that a few lines will suffice to refresh the reader's memory concerning the facts of the case. The *Forfarshire* steamer, on the way from Hull to Dundee, struck on one of the Farne Islands on the 5th September 1838. These islands, twenty-five in number, lie off the coast of Northumberland. On one of them, about a mile distant, is a light-house, of which Grace Darling's father was keeper. When the ship was quite broken, and the greater part of the crew and passengers drowned, nine persons were seen clinging to a bit of rock. No one was in the light-house but Grace, and her father and mother. She entreated him so earnestly to go off in a boat to the rock, that he at length yielded, although his long experience told him how fearful was the danger. The mother helped to thrust the boat into the water; the father and daughter each took an oar, and they rowed with all their energy. The peril was most imminent; yet they succeeded in reaching the rock or islet. What was then the astonishment of the wrecked

## SHIPWRECKS.

people, to see that one of their two deliverers was a young woman! All were taken off the rock, and conveyed safely to the light-house.

There is a very important matter connected with boat aid in shipwreck, which has been painfully impressed upon public attention on many recent occasions. One of the most wretched and annoying failures to which life-saving apparatus is subject is this—that when a life-boat, or a boat of any description, is about to be lowered from a ship, some kind of hitch or obstruction frequently occurs to frustrate the object in view. The boats are generally suspended over the sides of the vessel by chains or ropes which pass over a windlass; and the boat will descend by its own weight when the windlass-rope is loosened. But there are numerous minor matters to be attended to, which, in a time of danger and excitement, are very likely to be overlooked; and hence, frequently a whole boat-load of people are precipitated into the sea in their attempt to leave an endangered ship. After the sad disaster to the *Amazon* West India steamer, in 1852, where many lives were lost through the mismanagement of the boats, Mr Lacon devised a new mode of lowering boats, and published a pamphlet relating to it. A description of the apparatus would involve the use of too many technical nautical terms to be interesting or even intelligible to ordinary readers. In respect to the terrible calamity just alluded to, when the magnificent *Amazon* was destroyed by fire in the course of a few hours, the boats were signally unfortunate. We will quote a few words from Mr Vincent, a midshipman who afterwards described what had occurred under his own notice—simply premising that mail-boat, pinnace, cutter, dingy, and gig, are the names of five kinds of boats with which the ship was provided:—‘The mail-boat, when lowered, was immediately swamped, with about twenty-five people in her, all of whom were lost. The pinnace, when lowered, sheered across the sea before the people in her could unhook the fore-tackle. They were thereby washed out, and the boat remained hanging by the bow. While clearing away the second cutter, a sea struck her, raised her off the cranes, and unhooked the bow-tackle; the fore-end immediately fell down, and the people in her, with the exception of two, who hung doubled over the thwarts, were precipitated into the sea and drowned. Sixteen men, including two passengers, succeeded in clearing away and lowering the life-boat on the starboard side; they used every endeavour to save those in the water, but were swept past so rapidly, that their exertions were without avail. At about the same time, I, with the chief-steward, one passenger, and two seamen, got into and lowered the dingy, and were picked up by the life-boat about half an hour afterwards, when we immediately took the small boat in tow, and stood down for the ship; but the wind and sea increasing, and the dingy being upset, and ourselves being nearly swamped, we were obliged to let the small boat go, and keep the life-boat with her head to the sea. There

## SHIPWRECKS.

was now on our quarter a boat with five men in her (supposed to be the gig), but we could not, from the severity of the weather, render her any assistance; about an hour afterwards, we suddenly lost sight of her.' Of the 115 lives lost by this appalling catastrophe, very many were unquestionably owing to the defective boat-lowering apparatus.

When the legislature insisted that every ship should have boats enough to contain the whole crew and passengers, it made no provision for the mode of managing these boats; nor ought there to be any need, if owners and captains did their duty, for legislating on such a matter at all. The fate of the *Amazon* drew public attention very strongly to this subject, and many suggestions were made bearing upon it. Mr Lacon's plan, just noticed, was one of the novelties; and another was soon after proposed by Mr Jeffreys. His intention is, that the boat may be filled with people while yet suspended; that it may be lowered by one man within the ship; that it may be loosened from the tackle by two men in the boat itself; and may then float away free from the ship. The efficacy of the plan can be pronounced upon only by practical seamen; but this kind of facility of action is unquestionably desirable, if attainable. Another inventor, Lieutenant M'Killop, also, in 1852, proposed a plan of stowing life-boats *outside* instead of *upon* the paddle-boxes of steamers, with such an arrangement of ropes and tackle as to permit the speedy lowering of the boat. Other plans have been suggested in considerable number, and we would fain hope that success will attend some among them. In this, as in other matters, what we require is—to have the right thing in the right place at the right time: a very simple proposition, perhaps, but wonderfully difficult to realise; certainly a ship's crew ought so to approximate to it as to have the ship's boats always ready for safe launching.

An extraordinary voyage from Liverpool to London was made in 1852, on a sort of life-raft, invented by Messrs Richardson, two gentlemen residing in North Wales. The raft consists primarily of two iron cylinders or pontoons, 4 feet long by 2½ in diameter; they are placed side by side, at a distance of 3 feet apart; and as their ends are tapered, curved, and turned inwards, they meet in a point at head and stern. They are divided into water-tight compartments, and are made strong and rigid. On the top of these pontoons, narrow beams are laid crosswise, and battens on the beams lengthwise, thus forming a platform about 30 feet long, with beams and battens so open as to let water pass between them. Above the platform are the necessary fittings for oars and sails. There are seats for sixteen rowers, and the raft will contain eighty persons. The whole weighs about 2½ tons, and draws only 11 inches of water. The water-tight compartments contain—some, inflated bladders, and the others, cork-shavings, to give buoyancy. This singular raft experienced some rough weather on the circuitous coast-voyage from Liverpool to London; but it

## SHIPWRECKS.

behaved well, and rose buoyantly on the waves. It has not, so far as we have heard, been tried in pulling off shore against a gale of wind to a wreck; but it has frequently beached and rowed off again in a strong breeze.

This curious raft, midway between a boat and a buoy in construction, leads us to a notice of the buoyant contrivances which are intended for the safety of persons actually immersed in the water, whether through shipwreck or any minor accident. We may call them life-buoys, or life-rafts, or life-pontoons—the name matters but little. It is provoking to think how heedless sailors are of life-preserving plans and efforts. Whether we were right in saying that they have a superstitious dread, a kind of Mohammedan fatalism, in respect to any provisions against accidental death, we may at anyrate say, that there are many simple life-preserving contrivances which captains and sailors might adopt, but do not. The Rev. James Bremner, of Orkney, proposed in 1792 a plan by which an ordinary ship's boat might have a self-righting quality given to it, analogous to that of a life-boat. He proposed to place two small water-tight casks parallel to each other near the head of the boat, and one near the stern, firmly lashed down; and he also proposed to attach about three hundredweights of iron to the keel of the boat. Sixty years have since elapsed, but nothing has shewn that this is other than a simple and sensible plan. It is remarked in the *Life-boat*, that 'Mr Bremner's great object was to shew, that each collier that sails along our coasts, and, we may add, each emigrant ship, troop ship, or steamer that crosses the Atlantic, has the means on board for fitting the boats of the vessel as life-boats in a simple and inexpensive manner; and so it undoubtedly has, yet none, we believe, adopt it. Why, when a light collier starts on her homeward voyage—for it is chiefly light colliers that are wrecked—should she not secure an empty tight-water cask into the head and stern sheets of her principal boat? It would not be half an hour's work, when the lashings were once prepared and the ring-bolts in her keelson; and if not required, ten minutes would remove the whole on reaching her port. The materials are always on board, and any sailor could fit them to the boat; and then in case of need, there would be a life-boat that could not sink, even if filled with water, always ready to land the crew in case of wreck.' There is another reason why a boat *from* a distressed ship might be better circumstanced than one *to* the ship: 'Vessels are frequently cast upon a coast where there is no life-boat; and on many occasions a ship's boat would drive ashore before the wind, when, owing to the fury of the gale, no life-boat could get off from a lee-shore to her assistance.'

Newspaper readers will remember an exciting account of a wreck in the Pacific a few years ago, in which the crew constructed a raft, while on a desolate island, on such fragments of the wreck as happened to drift that way. They made it as large and as strong as they could; they stowed upon it all the provisions and

## SHIPWRECKS.

stores which they could gather up among the floating reliquæ ; they placed themselves upon it, men, women, and children ; they navigated it to a considerable distance ; and they were ultimately picked up by a ship which espied the frail bark and its nearly starved burden. Such a raft is a type of a large class, from Robinson Crusoe's downwards.

The buoys, or floating objects to which a man might cling in moments of danger, are so numerous and varied, that one might think all hazard of drowning to be dissipated ; but, unfortunately, in this as in other important matters, the precious safeguard is not always at hand in the place and at the time when it is wanted. It is, of course, not necessary to describe an ordinary buoy : it is a light floating body which serves as a mark or signal in rivers and harbours ; but anything which is buoyant may be deemed a buoy, and it may be shewn in a few words how such buoyant objects are proposed to be used as life-preservers. Captain Gordon, about thirty years ago, formed a buoy of a series of bamboos of different lengths fastened together ; the uppermost piece was the longest, the others diminished gradually to the lowest, which was the shortest of all ; thus forming a triangle, which was covered with pieces of sound cork, strongly fixed to the bamboo rods ; two of these triangles to be attached to a boat, to render it buoyant. Another contrivance, invented by Mr Boyce, was intended to be kept at a ship's stern, to be dropped into the water when wanted : it was composed of two hollow wooden cylinders, made air-tight, and connected with a wooden grating to form a sort of raft ; it was furnished with a rudder, mast, and sail. Captain Lillicrap, in 1830, proposed to render ordinary warping-buoys more useful, by nailing battens from end to end along their surfaces ; the battens to serve as handles or holding-places to any persons who might be capsized near the buoy : and the crew of a small vessel has actually been saved by this means in the harbour of Portsmouth. Lieutenant Cooke has invented a buoy which is much used in the navy : it consists of two hollow copper globes connected by a horizontal rod, from the middle of which rises a vertical stem containing a fuse at the top ; this is lighted, the buoy is lowered from the stern of the ship, and any person in the water clings to the buoy, attracted towards it at night by the light. Captain Beadon has suggested a life-buoy consisting of a metal cylinder eight feet long by one in diameter, having a keel, a kind of saddle on which a man may sit astride, a staff on which a light may be kindled, and a paddle to work the buoy. Lieutenant Irvine's life-buoy is a veritable portmanteau, so closely made that neither air nor water can enter it, and so buoyant that even when filled with clothes, two persons may float upon it ; while it can easily be thrown into the sea from a ship. Captain Henvey's life-buoy consists of a light wooden frame, shaped like a horseshoe, but sufficiently wide to admit a man's body, and rendered buoyant by plates and disks of cork. Mr Taylor has devised a sort of

## SHIPWRECKS.

deck-chair, capable of being quickly converted into a water-tight boat-shaped vessel, fit to hold and support one person. The great display in Hyde Park shewed us a multitude of novelties belonging to the life-buoy class—such as Spencer's buoyant and water-tight trunk, 'capable of sustaining fifteen persons in the water;' Hely's catamaran, or life-float, composed of waterproof canvas cylindrical cases, filled with bedding, clothing, and any useful articles of less specific gravity than water; Lavars' buoyant settee for passenger steamers, capable of being converted into a raft; Clark's buoy, which is a cot for a ship's berth in one form, and a safety-boat in another; Taylor's deck-chair, just described; and many others. One of these contrivances, by Mr Silver, consists of a buoyant mattress; there are numerous waterproof tubes, partly distended with horsehair, woollen flock, or cocoa-nut fibre, in such a manner, that in case of accident happening to one or more of the tubes, the others may be sufficient to sustain the required weight on the water. The tubes, when stuffed with any of these materials, are made up into mattresses and pillows; when thrown into the sea, they will float, and immersed persons may lie upon or cling to them. It is calculated that such a mattress, weighing 17 pounds, will sustain a weight of 284 pounds on the surface of the water. Some of them are prepared expressly for emigrant ships, and are sold at 9s. each; one such has been kept floating on the water, and bearing a weight of 96 pounds, for five days, without giving entrance to the wet, or losing its buoyancy. Mattresses such as these, would certainly be useful appliances in all passenger ships.

Until the manufacture of waterproof cloth had become common, buoyant garments were but little attended to among life-preserving contrivances. The chief attempts of earlier date were by means of corks and air-tubes, attached in some way to the person. One of the oddest novelties was an *air-hat*: the hat was so made that air could be blown into a space behind the lining; and such buoyancy was hence attained, that, according to the inventor's account, a man might be supported by clinging to the hat in the water. Messrs Macintosh have introduced a life-cloak or cape, made of waterproof cloth, and capable, by blowing air through a stop-cock into a vacancy formed by a double thickness of cloth, of supporting a man by its buoyancy. Mr Reece, in 1843, contrived an inflated pad or cushion of India-rubber, so attached to the back, that the wearer might float with his face uppermost; while there was a wire-gauze protector to fix over the mouth and nostrils, sufficient to admit air for respiration, but to expel water. Those who remember Class 8 at the Great Exhibition of 1851, will call to mind the strange compound of oddities and utilities among the life-preserving apparatus. There was Mr Clayton's 'swimming glove,' designed and formed on the model of the web-foot; there were Mr Light's 'ladies' and gentlemen's yachting-jackets,' to support the body in case of accidental immersion; there was

## SHIPWRECKS.

Mr Reeks' nautical cap, which can be immediately converted into a safety swimming-belt; there was Mr Vicker's life-belt, made of sail-canvas, stuffed with cork cuttings, and forming a comfortable cubical seat when on shipboard; there was Mr Hely's life-girdle, composed of spherical floats strung upon an endless elastic band; there were Mr Carte's 'self-adjusting' cork life-belt and Mr Laurie's 'self-inflating' life-float; there was Mr Caulcher's life-preserving elastic cork-jacket, 'capable of being worn unobserved under a coat or a mantle;' there was Lieutenant Halkett's *multum in parvo*, which is a boat-cloak when uninflated, a cloak-boat when inflated, and a bed if you choose to employ it as such; there was Mr Walker's hat-case, 'answering the purpose of a safety life-buoy float, or as a foot-bath, and many other useful purposes;' and there were Mr Cox's 'swimming-stockings, and safety swimming-swan, to assist persons in escaping from shipwreck!'—It would almost seem as if persons might plunge into the water, for the very pleasure of using such benevolently intended contrivances.

Would it not be better that our arctic navigators should wear life-belts of some kind when on their perilous journeys? Might not the estimable and brave Lieutenant Bellot have been saved from a watery grave, if he had been provided with some such safeguard? Let us shortly narrate the sad story of his loss, and endeavour to derive a lesson from it.

In August 1853, Commander Pullen, in the *North Star*, sent dispatches by Captain Inglefield to Sir Edward Belcher, who was in another part of the icy regions. In a letter to Sir Edward, he states that, on the 12th of that month, Lieutenant Bellot of the *Phoenix* volunteered to conduct a party with dispatches to Sir Edward's ship; but that the brave young officer had lost his life in the attempt so to do, in Wellington Channel. The four men who accompanied him returned to the *Phoenix*, two on the 20th and two on the 21st, worn out with fatigue and exhaustion. From the narratives of the men, it appears that the journey was a perilous one, mostly among ice which was neither firm enough nor loose enough to be depended upon. On their third day—they encamped by night on the ice—they passed a crack about four feet wide, running across the Channel. This danger over, Lieutenant Bellot wished to make a temporary landing near a cape which came full in view; and he tried to get on shore in an India-rubber boat with which they were provided. They conveyed three boat-loads of stores on shore from their sledge. While two of the men were on shore, and the other two men, with the lieutenant, were on the ice, the ice began to move under them, and speedily the connection between the two parties was broken. The two men on shore had the grief of seeing their three companions gradually float off from land, being borne away by the moving ice beneath them. They watched and watched for six hours; but after two hours they lost sight of their floating comrades: when they last saw

them, the lieutenant was standing on a hummock of ice, and his two companions were standing by the sledge. After waiting six hours, the two men who were on land made the best of their way back to the ship.

Now for the narratives of the other two men, who were on the perilous ice-islet with the young officer. William Johnson, one of the two seamen, has deposed as follows:—‘ We got the provisions on shore on Wednesday the 17th. After we had done that, there remained on the ice David Hook, Lieutenant Bellot, and myself, having with us the sledge, macintosh awning, and little boat. Commenced trying to draw the boat and sledge to the south, but found the ice driving so fast; left the sledge, and took the boat only; but the wind was so strong at the time that it blew the boat over and over. We then took the boat with us under shelter of a piece of ice; and M. Bellot and ourselves commenced cutting an ice-house with our knives for shelter. M. Bellot sat for half an hour in conversation with us, talking on the danger of our position. I told him I was not afraid, and that the American Expedition were driven up and down this channel by the ice. He replied: “ I know they were; and when the Lord protects us, not a hair of our heads shall be touched ! ” I then asked M. Bellot what time it was. He said about a quarter-past eight A.M. —Thursday the 18th—and then lashed up his books, and said he would go and see how the ice was driving. He had only been gone about four minutes when I went round the same hummock under which we were sheltered to look for him, but could not see him: and on returning to our shelter, saw his stick on the opposite side of a crack, about five fathoms wide, and the ice all breaking up. I then called out: “ Mr Bellot ! ” but no answer. At this time blowing very heavy. After this, I again searched round, but could see nothing of him. I believe that when he got from the shelter the wind blew him into the crack, and his south-wester being tied down, he could not rise.’ The men ultimately reached the ship after much peril and suffering.

Again we would ask—ought not persons placed in the situation of this gallant young officer to be provided with a life-belt? The ‘ south-wester tied down,’ of which Johnson speaks, could not act as a buoy, for it was not inflated with air; and it may, as Johnson surmises, have hastened poor Bellot’s destruction.

A mode of rendering service to ships in distress, differing widely from any of these hitherto noticed, is that in which a rope is conveyed from the shore to the ship. It may be that a vessel is stranded so near the coast as to be within reach of help by this agency, either as a substitute for, or in addition to, the aid furnished by life-boats. Sometimes a boat cannot be used at all when most wanted, as is the case where there is a perpendicular cliff with no path for descent to the sea-side. An instance of this kind occurred about twenty years ago, a little to the south of the Tyne: the *Wilhelmina* was wrecked almost close to the coast, in sight of



## SHIPWRECKS.

numerous spectators, none of whom could render aid under the particular circumstances of that coast. This catastrophe led to the invention of the *cliff-wagon*, by Mr Davison of Whitburn. It consists of a kind of stage or frame, which can be wheeled to the edge of a cliff, and retained there by cramps digging into the ground; a kind of seat is slung from a projecting or overhanging end of the platform, and is raised or lowered by pulleys. On this seat, three or four men may be lowered to the beach, with ropes, life-buoys, &c., to render such aid to a distressed ship as may be practicable.

But a more practically useful apparatus is Captain Manby's life-rope. This gentleman, while filling an official situation at Yarmouth, conceived the plan of throwing a rope to a stranded ship by means of a shot. After many experiments, he found that the rope might be fastened to the shot by means of a piece of plaited hide, and then fired from a howitzer; he next organised a plan for conveying the whole apparatus easily from place to place. He very soon had the satisfaction of saving the lives of a ship's crew by means of his invention; and a large number of persons have since had reason to bless the invention and the inventor. A later contrivance, by Mr Carte of Hull, employs a rocket instead of a cannon-ball. The action of this rocket apparatus may be rendered intelligible by the following description:—When a rocket is about to be discharged to a stranded ship, a light three-legged stand is fixed steadily upon the ground; this supports a discharging frame, so poised that the rocket may be discharged in any direction, and at any angle. The rockets vary from 3 pounds to 12 pounds each; they carry a length of line or rope varying from 12 pounds to 32 pounds; and they will carry this line to a distance varying from 180 to 380 yards. The rocket is discharged by applying to its mouth a lighted port-fire, which burns about a minute. If the rocket succeeds in carrying a line to the ship, this line is used as a kind of pathway, along which ropes and life-buoys, and baskets and belts, may be conveyed to the ship. Mr Dennett's life-rockets act in a manner very similar to this. The six-pound rockets are about 15 inches long, and are attached to a stick about five feet long to guide their flight.

Although rockets and mortars have in many cases failed when efficient service has been expected of them, they must be regarded as decidedly valuable aids among life-preserving contrivances. In 1851, there were 91 coast-guard stations provided with rockets, 38 with mortars, and 38 with both rockets and mortars. It is known that 250 lives have been saved by the lines thrown out by rockets and shot, besides others of which no sufficient record has been kept.

A very exciting scene which took place near the Land's End in 1851, will illustrate the peculiar circumstances under which the life-rockets are sometimes used. On the 11th of January, the brig *New Commercial*, of Whitby, struck upon a rock which

## SHIPWRECKS.

rises sixty or seventy feet out of the sea, about a mile from the bluff headland of Cape Cornwall at the Land's End. The ship was utterly wrecked; all on board but three were washed away after taking refuge on the rock for some hours; one of the remaining three floated on a fragment of the wreck sufficiently near the shore to be saved; and the other two, the captain and his wife, were left on the lonely rock. Mr Forward, in the revenue-cutter *Sylvia*, went out to their rescue, and tried to reach the rock in a boat manned by four men; but the furious sea drove them back, and nearly capsized their boat. The cliffs were lined with spectators, whose good wishes and prayers were all they had to offer; the two poor wrecked sufferers were left to pass the night on the isolated bit of rock—without fire, covering, food, and almost without hope. On the following morning, which was Sunday, the edge of the cliff was lined with thousands instead of hundreds of anxious watchers, and several boats set out to make a second attempt. Captain Davies, of the coast-guard, took out with him a nine-pounder life-rocket. The sea still ran high, so high, indeed, that no boat could venture within 100 yards of the rock. Captain Davies having arranged his boat and rocket in the best way which the tempestuous sea permitted, fired, and the rope reached the rock; but unfortunately it fell on a sharp ledge, and was cut in twain, so that the end slipped off into the sea. Distress at the failure was felt both by the two unfortunates and by the spectators on shore; but Captain Davies renewed his attempt, and shot a second rope so accurately, that the man was enabled to secure it. The poor wife, having the rope well fastened round her, jumped into the sea, and was pulled on board the boat. A third shot enabled the man to secure the friendly rope which was to bring him also to the boat. While this was doing, the sea often rose to such a maddening height as to conceal man, woman, rope, boat, and all, and the spectators on shore were wrought up to a high pitch of excitement. The man and his wife both reached the shore; but she had undergone more than her strength could bear: she was dead by the time the boat touched the beach. In this instance, there was no life-boat at hand; but it illustrates in a valuable way the possibility of sending a safety-rope from a boat even during a high sea. The life-boat and the life-rocket are evidently fitted to render service under different and often incompatible conditions.

One of Carte's rockets was on one occasion the means of aiding a poor shipwrecked crew in a remarkable way. Off the Durham coast, a rocket was fired to an unfortunate ship; the crew caught the rope, and tried to work it properly; but the poor fellows were so benumbed and exhausted, that the rope fell from their hands. One of the spectators on shore suggested the happy expedient of sending a *stone bottle of hot coffee* to revive them. This was done; the bottle was warped along the rope, which already extended from the shore to the ship; and the men, revived and

## SHIPWRECKS.

heartened by the beverage, aided in working at their own deliverance. This was one of those happy thoughts which, occurring just at the right place and the right time, are veritable jewels beyond all price.

The coast-guard, appointed for very different purposes, render more service than all other persons combined to vessels wrecked on the coast. They are familiar with the use of the mortar and the rocket; they are always on the watch; they are always ready to act; and their organised discipline gives them a great advantage over the brave but unsystematic efforts of fishermen and sailors.

There is one more peril of the deep which our space enables us to notice—*lightning*; and one more mode in which humanity has led men to seek the means of saving their fellow-men from destruction.

Many of the narratives of ships struck by lightning are very exciting and remarkable. We will notice a few among the mass which have been recorded. In 1840, a government cruiser, the *Chichester*, was struck with lightning off the Irish coast. The masts, and part of the deck and bulwarks, were destroyed. A ball of fire seemed to descend from the mast, and broke through the deck; it knocked down several of the crew, leaving a sensation as if a solid piece of timber had fallen upon them. The captain was seated with his two daughters at dinner in the cabin when the accident occurred; the ball of fire passed over the table, shivering in pieces the whole of the dishes and glasses, without injuring any of the persons present. The sky-lights were thrown up, the whole deck in the centre of the vessel was raised off the beams, and the patent-lights were all thrown out. The electric fluid passed through the bottom of the vessel, in many places along the copper bolts, and tore off the copper sheathing opposite to them and under water. The vessel was filled with smoke for some time afterwards, but no part actually caught fire.

Captain Fitzroy has given a good description of a lightning-stroke suffered by a government ship. 'I was a lieutenant on board the *Thetis* when her foremast was shattered by lightning in Rio harbour, and shall not easily forget the sensation. Some of the officers were sitting in the gun-room one very dark evening, while the heavens were absolutely black, and the air hot and close to an oppressive degree, but not a drop of rain falling, when a rattling crash shook the ship. Some thought several guns had been fired together; others, an explosion of powder had taken place; but one said: "The ship is struck by lightning!" and that was the case. The top-gallant masts were not aloft, but the fore-topmast was shivered into a mere collection of splinters, the hoops on the foremast were burst, and the interior as well as outside of the mast irreparably injured. From the foremast, the electric fluid seemed to have escaped by some conductor without doing further damage; yet it filled the forepart of the ship with a sulphureous smell, and the men who were there thought

something full of gunpowder was blown up. No person received injury. . . . I should say that the electric fluid shook rather than shattered the fore-topmast, for it did not fall, but resembled a bundle of long splinters, almost like reeds. It twisted round the head of the foremast, instead of descending by the shortest line, went into the centre of the spar, and then out again to the hoops, every one of which above the deck was burst asunder.'

A terrible fate was that of the *Tanjore*, a fine East Indiaman, which was struck by lightning off Ceylon in 1820. At eight in the evening, the horizon became suddenly dark and lowering, and a severe squall of wind ushered in a most terrific storm. A flash of lightning appeared, and destroyed two men in an instant—literally tearing open their bodies; many others were struck; and all the rest received an electric shock. The lightning struck a cargo of brandy, ignited it, and thus set the ship on fire. So instantaneous were all these events, that the crew were only able to liberate two of the boats; forty-eight persons descended into these boats, taking with them a binnacle-compass, some ship-papers, and a box of dollars, but not an atom of food or a drop of water; they had only three oars for the two boats, and had at first enough to do to keep clear of the burning ship. The hapless vessel sank in about six hours; but the crew, after being fourteen hours at sea, and forty miles from land, were fortunate enough to meet with a native vessel, which rescued them.

Enough of these horrors. That lightning will strike a ship as well as a building on land is obvious; and there are many circumstances which render the visitation still more terrible. A ship, with its whole contents, is a unit, a complete item separated from all other items; it has a peculiar degree of helplessness from without, and should all the more be provided with protecting appliances from within. If a ship be lightning-struck, assistance from other quarters is truly of remote probability, on account of the fire often produced. Regarded as a question of statistics, the amount of loss to British ships by lightning-strokes is almost inconceivably large. More than 250 ships of war were so struck in forty years from 1793, or something like six every year. In 150 cases, occurring mostly between 1793 and 1815, nearly 100 lower-masts of line-of-battle ships and frigates, with a corresponding number of topmasts and smaller spars, together with various stores, were wholly or partially destroyed. One ship in eight was set on fire in some part of the rigging or sails; upwards of seventy seamen were killed, and more than twice this number wounded. Besides the actual destruction of life and property, the mere detention of a large ship for repairs is a serious item—an average line-of-battle ship costing the country full L.100 per day for current expenses, superadded to the capital sunk in building and storing it. The ships engaged in commerce being so much more numerous than those engaged in war, the above numbers give but a feeble idea of the total aggregate cost to the nation from these perilous lightning-strokes.

## SHIPWRECKS.

The question that arises, then, is—can lightning-strokes be averted; or, if not averted, can they be rendered harmless? The resulting answer is interesting, and even scientifically beautiful; for it is now known that, though we cannot keep away the lightning, we can take the dread out of it—remove the sting.

Like all other useful contrivances, lightning-conductors have been perfected by very slow degrees. The ancient Thracians were wont to shoot arrows at a thunder-cloud, under an impression that they would disperse the dreaded lightning. Some of the early nations entertained an opinion, that lightning will not act to a greater depth than five feet below the surface of the ground, and they used accordingly to seek shelter in caves and deep pits. The Japanese are said by Kæmpfer, to covet a retreat in a cave containing a pool of water, the water being expected to put out the fire of the lightning. The Romans believed that seal-skin was a preservative against lightning; and the shepherds of Avennes are said to this day to wear snake-skins in their hats as a safeguard. The emperor Tiberius, when a thunder-storm approached, was accustomed to put on a circlet of laurel leaves, to ward off the lightning's power. In Alberti's treatise on architecture, written about 1480, occurs the following bit of lightning philosophy:—'There are some things in nature which are endued with properties by no means to be neglected; particularly that the laurel-tree, the eagle, and the sea-calf, are never touched by lightning. There are some, therefore, who suppose that if these are enclosed in the wall, the lightning will never hurt it.' It was at one time customary to place thick balls of glass on the projecting points of buildings, ships, and light-houses; there was a glass-ball of this kind on the vane-rod of Doncaster church so late as 1836. There have been instances known of a small chamber of glass having been made for persons overcome with dread of lightning. In some countries, two exactly opposite plans are adopted during a thunder-storm, both influenced by religious motives: the Esthonians close their doors and windows as completely as possible, to avoid leaving an entrance for the evil spirit whom God is pursuing during a thunder-storm; whereas the Jews, in some countries, open their doors and windows that their expected Messiah may come in the thunder-cloud.

While so much difference of opinion prevailed concerning the action of a lightning-stroke, it is not to be expected that any efficient plan could be laid down for the preservation of ships; but as soon as it became established—chiefly through the experiments and reasoning of Franklin—that the lightning simply requires an easy path along which to travel to the earth, a clue was afforded which led to successful results. It is found that the electric discharge falls upon those bodies which tend to assist its progress; that if any damage is done, it is in places where the line of ready passage is broken; and that in order to protect buildings and ships, it is useful to provide a continuous line for the electric fluid to

follow in its descent to the earth—a single line of rail for this most rapid of all locomotives. It has been abundantly ascertained that metal is better than any other substance for this rail, this line of communication. When metallic rods began to be actually attached to buildings, in the eighteenth century, the superstitious terrors of the people led them to deem the innovation a presumptuous one. Guyton de Morveau had much ado to appease the people when he set up a lightning-rod on the house of the Academy of Sciences at Dijon; it was only when he stated that the gilded points of the rods had been purposely sent by the pope from Rome, that they ceased their opposition. A man in armour is safer than a man in ordinary dress, and an iron ship is safer than a wooden ship, because the metal is more continuous, the path for the lightning less broken. It may seem at first a frightful thought to attract lightning towards the armour or the ship—which we really do—but in truth it is better that that resistless agent should travel along a good road purposely prepared by ourselves, than take an erratic course hither and thither, knocking down everything in its way. Like many other powerful things which we meet with in daily life, we cannot stop it; but we can ward off a little of the roughness of the blow by bending the line of travel.

In the actual use of a metallic conductor, to convey lightning through a building to the earth, or through a ship to the sea, there may be strips of metal, or wires, or rods, or tubes—any form so long as the metal is continuous; and any metal would suffice. But experience has determined that particular forms and particular metals are preferable to others. Tin conducts electricity better than lead, iron better than tin, zinc better than iron, and copper better than zinc; and, consequently, other things being equal, tin is the worst, and copper the best of these five metals. Copper and iron are the metals generally used—copper in all cases where the wise economy of employing the best material is adopted. The forms found to be most serviceable are flat bands and thin tubes, to expose a large surface in proportion to the quantity of metal. In respect to a building on land, it is comparatively easy to apply a long metallic rod, the upper end of which shall be above the highest part of the house, while the lower end shall be immersed in the damp earth below; but in a ship the difficulties are much greater. The masts, and yards, and rigging, are formed in numerous pieces, liable to be shifted in position very frequently during the working of the ship.

In the early attempts to protect ships from lightning, short rods of copper were united end to end by means of eyes or loops, so as to form a sort of chain; this chain was fastened to a rope, the upper end of which was attached to the mast-head, while the lower end hung over the ship's side into the water. Dr (afterwards Bishop) Watson recommended this plan to the Admiralty about ninety years ago; it was adopted, and every ship in the royal navy was provided with such a chain, packed in a box. But herein

## SHIPWRECKS.

consisted the insufficiency of the plan; the very circumstance of the chain being packed in a box took away a woful percentage of its usefulness. The intention was, that the chain should be kept in the box until a thunder-storm was approaching, when it should be quickly adjusted to its required place. But seamen, as we have before remarked, have a great dislike to think about, or talk about, or provide against dangers at sea; and the chain was very seldom in its proper place in the time of need. Sometimes the box was packed away so effectually, that the thunder-storm had done its work before the protecting chain could be liberated. Besides, it is found that all the masts must be attended to, since the lightning may capriciously fix upon either of those which are unprotected. A plan introduced into the French navy, about thirty years ago, was to twist copper wire into the form of rope, and apply this rope as rigging from the vane-rod to the ship's side, where it was connected with a plate reaching to the water; but these movable conductors were as uncertain as the chains used in British ships.

It is now more than thirty years ago, that Sir W. Snow Harris began to impress on the Admiralty the propriety and duty of providing better lightning-conductors for the royal navy. Himself an accomplished experimenter in electrical science, he was enabled fully to appreciate the scientific bearings of the question; while his residence at Plymouth familiarised him with ships and their requirements. Against all those official obstacles which are so well known to stand in the way of improvements in government matters, he struggled year after year, battling under discouragements which would have defeated a man of less resolute mind. He brought before public notice the startling list of ships struck every year by lightning; and he cleverly made use of the *£ s. d.* argument, to render John Bull conscious of the magnitude of the loss occasioned by so trifling a neglect as a few bits of copper. His pertinacity met with due reward; he had the satisfaction to receive a knighthood and a pension from government, to see that his improved lightning-conductors were gradually being adopted in the royal navy, and to know that his contrivances have saved to the country many times the amount of the reward which the country has given him. Luckily for Sir William, his own private means were sufficient to back him up during his tough contest with official personages; if he had been a poor man, he would probably have 'gone to the wall' long before—leaving, as in so many other cases, the nation to be enriched by that which enriched not him.

The plan invented by Sir W. S. Harris, and adopted by the Admiralty, consists in effect in converting the masts themselves into conducting-rods. There are incorporated with the masts a double set of copper plates, so fixed to their surfaces as to form a continuous metallic line, and yet allow the mast that freedom of movement to which it is subject. These plates are connected with bands of copper leading through the side under the deck-beams, and with

## SHIPWRECKS.

large bolts leading through the keels and keelson. All the large metallic masses in the construction of the ship are brought into connection with these copper plates and bands; insomuch that, wherever the lightning may strike, there shall be a path of metal along which it can travel into the sea, leaving the wood-work untouched by its terrible force. The strips of sheet-copper for applying to the masts are about four feet long, varying in width from one and a half to five inches, according to the size of the mast. A shallow groove, equal in depth to twice the thickness of the copper, is formed along the hinder or stern side of each mast, from top to bottom; and in this groove the plates are secured by copper nails. There are two thicknesses of copper plates, so placed as to 'break joint,' and thus render the metallic connection all the more complete. At the lower part of each mast, the copper plates are connected with the copper bands running under the deck-beams, which bands find their way outside the ship into the water. Thus there is no waiting to fix up the apparatus when a storm is approaching; the apparatus is always fixed, always in its place. As the hollow columns in Paxton's Crystal Palace were always ready to carry off rain-water from the roof above to the earth below, so are the copper plates on Harris's masts always ready to carry off the electric fluid from the clouds above to the sea below.

The inventor, in a treatise on this subject, presents the advantages in the following light:— 'The cost of a first-rate, with all her stores, is not less than L.170,000; she carries full 900 men; and she is intended for the defence of one of the greatest maritime nations which has ever existed. Now, the protection of this splendid machine against one of the most fearful calamities to which she is exposed, may be attained at a cost of less than L.100; that is, the expense of labour in fixing the conductors to the ship, and the loss upon the wear of the copper material, which is always reconvertible and of a constant value. Her Majesty's navy once furnished with such conductors, as an integral part of the ship, little or no expense will be requisite, as the hulls will be always ready to receive masts fitted with the same conductors which have been already used in other ships whose services have for the time ceased; it is hence a mere affair of transfer from ship to ship.'

The success of these lightning-conductors has been very complete: it is known that many ships have been attacked by lightning while protected by these copper plates; but the metal has invariably carried off the perilous enemy, leaving the vessel unscathed. The following is one among many narratives corroborative of this success. Captain Sullivan has described what befell Her Majesty's ship *Beagle* off Monte Video a few years ago:— 'Having been on board Her Majesty's ship *Thetis*, at Rio de Janeiro a few years since, when her foremast was entirely destroyed by lightning, my attention was always very particularly directed to approaching electrical storms, and especially on the occasion now alluded to, as the



## SHIPWRECKS.

storm was unusually severe. The flashes succeeded each other in rapid succession, and were gradually approaching; and as I was watching aloft, the ship became apparently wrapt in a blaze of fire, accompanied by a simultaneous crash, which was equal if not superior to the shock I felt in the *Thetis*. One of the electrical clouds by which we were surrounded had burst on the vessel, and as the main-mast at the instant appeared to be a mass of fire, I felt certain that the lightning had passed down the conductor on that mast. The vessel shook under the explosion, and an unusual tremulous motion could be distinctly felt. As soon as I had recovered from the surprise of the moment, I ran below to state what had happened, and to see if the conductors had been affected; when just as I entered the gun-room, Mr Rowlett, the purser, ran out of his cabin (along the beam of which a main branch of the conductor passed), and said he was sure the lightning had passed along the conductor, for at the moment of the shock he heard a sound like rushing water along the beam. Not the slightest ill consequence was experienced; and I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction that, but for the conductor, the results would have been serious.'

: Among those whose efforts tend towards a humane assistance to their fellow-men in distress, let us gratefully remember the inventors of life-boats, life-rafts, life-buoys, life-garments, life-mortars, life-rockets, lightning-rods—all those who lend a helping-hand to the hardy sailor.





## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

**M**IDWAY between the market-town of T—— and the pretty village of Lisbourne, in a large red brick-house with some pretensions to the Elizabethan style of decoration, dwelt a family named Norrys, consisting of a brother and four sisters, the children of an opulent banker deceased, who had carried on business at T—— with considerable profit and éclat for nearly half a century. A very substantial and pleasantly situated dwelling was Lisbourne House, surrounded with paddocks, orchards, and walled gardens, sloping to the Lis—a clear shallow streamlet, from which the village derived its name, winding through rich pasture-lands, and shadowed by tall old trees, the habitations of ancient cawing colonies. And the oldest authorities said, that Lisbourne was older than the old trees which had been cut down before these grew up; old trees, beneath whose spreading

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

branches strange scenes were enacted, when battlement and tower arose beside the peaceful Lis, and the warder's thrilling voice re-echoed afar on the still evening air. On the site were now only ivy-covered ruins, affording shelter for bats and owls.

These picturesque ruins were the pride of the village and surrounding neighbourhood, the resort of the artist and antiquary, and the shrine at which Mr Norrys worshipped; for besides being on the Lisbourne property, they were regarded by him with a species of veneration on their own account; and the worthy gentleman had written and published a neat little book about them; and being a wonderful collector of rare and antique coins, he had bestowed unexampled labour and patience in exploring underground—boring and burrowing like the native conies. His researches had been rewarded by the discovery of a small iron coffer, containing the gems of his museum; but not contented with this, it had become the passion and sole business of his existence to delve about the ruins; and during whole summer days he would sit beneath the shade of some crumbling archway, absorbed in thought as to where his next efforts ought to be directed—for tradition had handed down many curious legends concerning the treasures buried there by the warriors of by-gone times. It was not for the gold as gold that Mr Norrys yearned; no, he had enough of that and to spare, but it was the rare and ancient coins he coveted, wherewith to enrich his already valuable collection.

The two elder Misses Norrys had attained that age which is pronounced uncertain; and being the seniors of their brother by a year or two, they were always much annoyed if he openly mentioned birthdays and such-like data, that led to disagreeable calculations. They were formal and precise in disposition and manner, plain in person, and with an inflated idea of their own social importance, which is frequently to be found in those who have not had their minds expanded by travel, or association with their superior, in point of acquirement or worldly position. The Misses Norrys had always been the first people in T—, consequently, they never looked beyond T—, and still considered themselves of paramount and exclusive importance; and this conceit was fostered by the deference with which they were treated by their neighbours at Lisbourne, from the clergyman to the doctor—the latter, however, being a most worthy and popular personage, whose frequent services were needed at Lisbourne House. There were several medical practitioners at T—, but Mr Medicott, the village apothecary, had secured the good graces of the Norrys family in preference to them all; and the third Miss Norrys being a confirmed invalid, whose health required constant supervision, Mr Medicott had become quite necessary to their comfort, and they regarded him more as a friend than as a mere paid attendant. His wife, too, despite her want of pretension and refinement—despite her fat cheeks

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

and hearty laugh, was well received by the stately ladies of Lisbourne House; and they often condescended to rest in Mrs Medicott's nice parlour, when tempted by a fine day to stroll over and see 'how the villagers got on.' But somehow, nobody *could* patronise little hearty Mrs Medicott—she was so simple and unpretending, and good-natured and humble; there was nothing obtrusive about her but her pleasant laugh, and that was absolutely infectious.

There was a merry twinkle in Mr Medicott's eye, a furtive humour, which, however, was veiled beneath an exterior scrupulously respectful and polite, yet having no tinge of obsequiousness. Mrs Medicott was a great reader of romances during her spare moments; it was a weakness of hers; she loved romance both in books and in reality, and a love-tale always excited her readiest sympathy. Notwithstanding a good and regular practice, Mr Medicott did not amass money as he might have done; nobody knew exactly why he continued in almost poor circumstances; but it was whispered that near and needy relatives were a constant drain upon his purse, and a source of vexation to his heart. It was a hard, toilsome life the village doctor's; but Mr Medicott was a healthy and contented man, and if he could have enjoyed a little more of his own dear humble home, he would have been very grateful and glad; but he made the best of necessity, and went on his way beloved and respected by all. But though the good doctor did not possess much of the current coin of the realm, he was a professed admirer of ancient coins; consequently, with Mr Norrys he was a man of judgment, and a prime favourite; and when the marriage of the fourth Miss Norrys was celebrated at Lisbourne House with much pomp and ceremony, Mr and Mrs Medicott were among the bridal guests. To be present at a marriage, and such a marriage, was the greatest felicity that could be afforded to Mrs Medicott. Lisbourne was not a place given to matrimony, and T—— was a dull town in that particular line, and, moreover, the Misses Norrys had always been set down as old maids in Mrs Medicott's private cogitations; so that it became a doubly delightful surprise to have a marriage in such a quarter. Nor was it a matter of surprise to Mrs Medicott only, when Miss Adelaide Norrys accepted young Mr Brandon, a London merchant, at the head of the old-established firm of Brandon & Co. Mr Brandon and Miss Adelaide Norrys first met at the T—— race-ball, and being mutually pleased with each other, and afterwards meeting more frequently at the house of mutual friends, the liking ripened into an affection, which speedily terminated in matrimony. It was one of those common-place marriages which happen every day—the bride was not interesting, or very young, or very pretty; the bridegroom was merely well dressed, and well to do in the world; and the Norrys family neither withheld consent nor bestowed any warm approval. Mr Brandon was rich and

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

respectable, and Adelaide seemed glad to exchange the monotony of Lisbourne House for a town-life; the elder sisters hoped it would turn out for Adelaide's happiness, but for *their* parts, it seemed wiser to remain content at home; but if Adelaide was determined to marry, why then, indeed, there appeared no positive objection to Mr Brandon. There was one who looked on and said nothing, and that one was the sick and suffering Anna Norrys; but then it was not her way to offer many remarks on the passing occurrences of daily life, although she was a keen observer and a sound reasoner. Anna's observation and judgment were much respected by her brother and sisters, and they often appealed to her for advice and direction when uncertain how to act; but Anna disliked such appeals, and had seldom been known to express her opinions, except in cases where she could materially assist others. And in the case of her sister's marriage, Anna seemed to think it a matter of course, that when Mr Brandon proposed he would be accepted; and after congratulating Adelaide in her usual quiet manner, she relapsed into the silent and thoughtful mood induced probably by her frail state of health. It was a well-conducted handsome ceremonial from first to last, the marriage being duly celebrated with feasting and ringing of bells, and the happy pair setting off on their bridal tour in a carriage-and-four.

Twelve months passed away, and Mr Brandon was left a widower with a little daughter, named after its deceased mother. This was a heavy blow doubtless; but Mr Brandon was immersed in the cares of business, and scarcely knew how to realise the stunning fact until called upon to think of the delicate baby. And when Anna Norrys proposed to her sisters that they should take charge of the poor motherless infant, she was listened to with attention; it was a 'serious responsibility,' the elder Misses Norrys contended, and Anna candidly allowed it was; but then what a comfort for Adelaide's child to be brought up at Lisbourne House by *them*! So, when the matter was finally arranged amongst themselves, and Mr Norrys had given his consent, it only remained to ascertain Mr Brandon's sentiments, and if he would be willing to part with all that remained to him of his lost love. Being an active and indefatigable manager of his own vast concerns, Mr Brandon felt really grateful to his sisters-in-law for taking the baby off his hands, and willingly confided it to their care; they had seen very little of him since his marriage, though Adelaide had always boasted of her perfect happiness, poor thing! And as Mr Brandon had mourned her death with all due outward decorum, good feeling existed between his late wife's family and himself, notwithstanding his readiness to part with the infant—a readiness he took no pains to conceal, for Mr Brandon was not gifted with fine sensibility. He promised, indeed, to visit Lisbourne frequently—as frequently as his avocations would permit; and during the two following years he kept his promise faithfully,

and had the pleasure of seeing his little daughter daily improve in health and vigour, and grow so like her mother, that the Misses Norrys declared, that when contemplating the graces of their pretty Adelaide, they hardly felt as if they had lost a sister.

For two years the Misses Norrys declared Mr Brandon to be an exemplary and pattern father—so regular and frequent in his visits to the little motherless child, even extending his patronage to Mr Medicott, and holding dissertations in Mrs Medicott's parlour concerning the numerous ailments to which little children are liable. This was very amiable and paternal; but somehow Mr Norrys the coin-fancier and his brother-in-law did not get on together so cordially as might have been expected; whether it was that Mr Brandon looked with contempt upon *all* coin save that in his own coffers, or from some other unknown cause, only the fact is certain, that Mr Norrys did not welcome the widower so warmly to Lisbourne as he had been wont to do in former times. At the end of two years, Mr Norrys alone expressed no surprise at the turn of affairs; he dug and groped in his beloved ruins more sedulously indeed than ever, and told his sisters they must have been blind not to have seen what was going forward. At the end of two years, Mr Brandon publicly announced his intention of entering a second time into the holy estate of matrimony, and with whom?—Ah, there was the blow and the puzzle—to choose Mary Ringles, the humble niece of Mrs Medicott, for a successor to the proud bride who had condescended to change the name of Norrys for the less ancient one of Brandon!

But so it was; and the elder Misses Norrys too late discovered that Mr Brandon's regular visits to Lisbourne had not been so entirely disinterested as they, in their simplicity, had imagined. However, there was no preventing the marriage; Mr Brandon had a right to please himself; and all the injured ladies did, was to look cool on Mrs Medicott and her offending niece, and to gain Mr Brandon's promise not to remove little Adelaide from their care in order to place her with a step-mother. This promise, after some trifling demur, Mr Brandon gave; he thought of his daughter's interest in a pecuniary point of view, and besides, his heart was not particularly twined round the child, though he did not say so, and no one knew it. The Misses Norrys had fine fortunes at their own disposal, to bequeath to whom they would; Mr Norrys, too—there was small likelihood of his marrying now, for Mary Ringles had helped him to sort his old coins, and they had looked bright beneath her smile, and her gay laugh had made the old ruins of Lisbourne seem alive again. No wonder Mr Norrys had looked askance on the young widower, for he was thinking of falling in love with Mary himself. His energies, however, slumbered, and he thought there was time enough to come forward; but Mr Brandon, meanwhile, secured the prize, and Mrs Medicott, in a flutter of joy and bewilderment, though very sorry to offend the 'Lisbourne House folks,' did all she

could to reconcile the worthy doctor to Mary's good-fortune. Mr Medlicott, however, would rather things had not gone so: his services were too valuable to be dispensed with at Lisbourne House; but he felt himself more tolerated than sought for, under the existing circumstances, and this unsettled a little his equanimity.

It was about a year subsequent to Mrs Brandon's death that Mary Ringles came to reside with the Medlicotts. It was generally reported that Mr Medlicott had been a loser to a considerable amount by a brother of this young lady's, the said brother being Mary's senior, and of a speculative turn. Both were orphans; and when Aspinax Ringles, as a last resource, determined to seek his fortune in another hemisphere, no shelter offered for poor Mary, his only sister, but that of the worthy doctor, whose means were crippled through the imprudence and selfishness of others. But Mr Medlicott had loved Mary as a child; and besides, she needed aid and protection, and the claim of the fatherless and friendless was enough to warm his tender heart. So when Aspinax, whose character and disposition peculiarly fitted him for toilsome adventure, sailed away from his native land, Mary came to Lisbourne, and found a happy home with the worthy couple, who, however, were not destined long to retain the fair girl beneath their roof. Mr Brandon first beheld Mary by the side of the suffering Anna, with whom she was ever a welcome visitor; he was struck with her beauty and cheerful winsome manner; he soon found his way to Lisbourne.

After his second marriage, Mr Brandon seldom visited Lisbourne House, probably feeling he was no longer a welcome guest; while Mary, who had made several efforts to win favour and affection, particularly on account of the little Adelaide, received such decided repulses from the Misses Norrys, that even her gentle nature shrank from further appeal. With Anna Norrys, indeed, Mary continued on friendly terms, so far as correspondence went; but Mr Norrys had not forgiven Mary for the slight she had put upon him, in preferring Mr Brandon; and all things considered, perhaps it was the best and wisest course for the two families to hold as little intercourse as possible. Mary, moreover, presented her husband with a daughter, whose appearance aroused the jealousy and ire of little Adelaide's two aunts, who declared 'it was a shame of Mr Brandon to bring forward a second family, and rob *their* niece; but Adelaide should be cared for, that she should.' Mary heard many of these details through Mrs Medlicott, and it pained her kind heart, to think that Mr Brandon's eldest born, and her own Fordyce, the daughters of one father, should be brought up not only as strangers to each other, but, she feared, with an admixture of animosity on one side at least. Fordyce, who continued to be an only child, for Mary had no more little ones, required the most watchful and tender care during her childhood; but as years glided on, so did health and loveliness increase, and

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

Mrs Medlicott rapturously declared, that 'Fordyce Brandon beat her sister Adelaide all to nothing in looks and cleverness!' Not that Mrs Medlicott said this at Lisbourne House, but she said all she *dared*, and hinted more; so that a constant feeling of rivalry and pique was kept up in the bosoms of the irritated Misses Norrys, who, whenever they heard of Fordyce being tall and beautiful, and clever and gay, considered a comparison was drawn with their niece, who, as the elder sister, ought to be far more considered than the daughter of a mere Mary Ringles. No such unamiable feelings were cherished by Mrs Brandon, who heard with regret that her step-daughter inherited the pride, and coldness of heart, and forbidding demeanour of her aunts. Her personal attractions, too, were of an inferior order; but then she was brought up as the heiress of Lisbourne, the idol of the whole family; and Mrs Medlicott said, 'Miss Adelaide carried herself like a duchess.' As to Mr Brandon, he never troubled his head about his eldest daughter—*she* was provided for in every way, he knew; and, in short, he was immersed in the cares of business, and had small leisure to devote to other thoughts. As Fordyce grew strong and tall, so did Mrs Brandon's motherly heart yearn to bring the alienated sisters together; and through the intervention of Mr Medlicott, she determined to effect her wishes. She wrote also to Anna Norrys on the subject, earnestly petitioning her to use all her influence and persuasion to induce the aunts to consent that Adelaide might come and pass a few weeks beneath her father's roof. Fordyce had an accomplished governess and first-rate masters, and the country girl might share and profit by these advantages, and the sisters might learn, too, the sweet lesson of love. But vain were Mrs Brandon's pleadings. The wrath of the Misses Norrys was greatly kindled at the idea of their niece leaving Lisbourne House and all its glories, to sojourn, even beneath a father's roof, in the vast Babel, where vulgarity jostled rank on every side. No indeed! They did not wish to keep the girls apart, as they told Mr Medlicott, and they hoped that Mr Brandon would be equally liberal to *both* his daughters—though Adelaide needed it not, Heaven be thanked!—as they heard on all sides the great merchant was a millionaire. So taking this fact into prudential consideration, the Misses Norrys condescended to express a wish, that Fordyce might sojourn at Lisbourne with Adelaide, instead of Adelaide staying in London with her. Mrs Brandon was too unselfish, and too eager for the meeting of the sisters, to suffer her own private feelings to interfere with this arrangement; though with a throbbing heart and tearful eyes, the fond mother parted with her only treasure. It was but for a time, and it was on the path of duty; but Fordyce was a sensitive, timid child, and she, too, wept at going among strangers, and almost unnerved Mrs Brandon. It is but justice to the Misses Norrys to say, that they strove all in their power to be kind, and to render the sweet girl's absence from home a summer holiday;



but all would not do; and had it not been for Anna Norrys and Mr and Mrs Medicott, Fordyce would have pined herself thin. She had been a star at home, all in all to her doting mother; she had never heard a cold word or seen a reproving look; and Adelaide was cold and hard—Adelaide, who was a star at Lisbourne, where there was not room for the two little suns to revolve without coming in contact. But how different they were! Fordyce, absent from her mother's side for the first time, affectionate, gentle, confiding, truthful, and unselfish, like her own dear mother; Adelaide, on the contrary, dictatorial, self-conceited, the conscious heiress of Lisbourne, regarding her sister with dislike, because every one spoke of her beauty; and because she herself discovered that Fordyce was her superior in knowledge and accomplishments. Fordyce was but a child, and Adelaide three years her senior; but the former had a little bit of pride notwithstanding her sensitive timidity, and she could not endure to be patronised at Lisbourne by Miss Brandon, so that a sort of coolness grew between the girls imperceptibly; and ere this *first* visit ended, Fordyce had written a letter, all blotted with tears, to her dear mamma, praying it might be the *last*, and begging to come home. Her happiest moments had been those passed beside the silent, suffering Anna, to whom she would read aloud, and prattle all about the wonderful sights she was sometimes allowed to visit in the great city—the pictures, the flowers, the birds and beasts, and the music; 'not but that I could not be happy anywhere, if papa and mamma were with me,' always added Fordyce. Anna Norrys studied this sweet child's character; it seemed a study which well repaid her; and there was something prophetic and searching in the gaze with which she dwelt on the fair and rather melancholy beauty that distinguished Fordyce; the child having one of those faces which seem to tell of coming sorrow, for, says Richter, 'either the future or the past is written in every face.' Such contemplation it might be which made Anna Norrys one day exclaim involuntarily to Mr Medicott, when the latter had dismissed Fordyce from the sick-chamber, previous to the daily medical examination: 'O Mr Medicott, I have had strange misgivings lately—dreams maybe, but sad and singular for all that. I hope—I fervently hope that my brother-in-law, Mr Brandon, has secured a *sure* provision for Mary and this sweet child. Merchants are sometimes unfortunate, as we know—sometimes ruined.'

'Nay, nay, my dear Miss Anna,' replied Mr Medicott smiling; 'you are weak and low. What puts such thoughts into your dear head? Why, Mr Brandon is reputed to be worth hundreds of thousands.'

'Oh, that may be, my dear doctor,' sighed Anna; 'so have many others that have died in poverty. Mr Brandon is speculative, and I cannot help wishing and praying that he may have secured a provision for Fordyce. I cannot help these feelings. But she is such a sweet, affectionate, unworldly child, that were

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

reverses to come—were she to lose, for instance, both parents and fortune, and to be cast on the wide cold world, how would such a tender plant endure the storm?’

‘God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, my dear Miss Anna,’ replied the doctor seriously; ‘but may He grant such contingencies as you allude to never may happen in the case of these dear ones! No doubt Mr Brandon will take all proper care of his wife and child; but there never has been any settlement made, that’s true, and I’ll make a memorandum of the fact; and when I next run up to town to see our dear Mary, I’ll speak openly of it to Brandon over our wine; for he’s a good fellow in the main, and very fond of Mary, as he ought to be, for she’s been a good, loving wife to him, prince-merchant though he be!’

And the good doctor did speak to Mr Brandon over their wine; and Mr Brandon laughed and pooh-poohed, and declared he intended to follow Mr Medlicott’s advice on the very first opportunity. Fordyce at length returned home, and her mamma promised her that they should never be parted again.

‘Never to be parted again?’ that fond mother and idolised child! Yes, parted again, and parted for ever on earth. Fordyce had scarcely completed her sixteenth year, when a short illness deprived her of the beloved parent who had been to her all that a mother can be to an only daughter—tender friend, sympathising companion, judicious counsellor, and wise instructress. Poor Fordyce! Stunned by the heavy and sudden calamity, she remained for many weeks in a state of mental exhaustion and bodily prostration, from which it seemed almost impossible she would revive; but youth triumphed, though she came forth from her sick-chamber as one who has looked long and closely on death. During this trying and terrible crisis, Mrs Medlicott had taken up her abode at Mr Brandon’s magnificent house, and with simple earnestness, strove her best to comfort him, and to tend the poor stricken girl who mourned so deeply her irreparable loss. But whenever she saw the time had arrived for Fordyce to benefit by necessary though painful exertion, then Mrs Medlicott gradually withdrew her support, and by degrees endeavoured to reconcile the young mistress of the house to her new position at the head of her father’s table. Fordyce had a vast fund of sound practical sense and a high standard of duty; and when the first outburst of sorrow passed over, and she clearly comprehended what was required of her, and that to indulge her own grief would be selfish and reprehensible, when her surviving parent needed cheering and companionship, then Fordyce, by a strong effort, conquered self; and at an age when girls are seldom out of the school-room, became the sole directress of the household and the sole guide of her own actions. Mr Brandon, more inextricably engaged than ever in great commercial concerns, rarely interfered with his daughter’s arrangements; so that she appeared at breakfast and dinner, the rest of the day was entirely at her own disposal.

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

With time came healing—healing, but not forgetfulness; and Mr Brandon, preoccupied as he was, observed the pale cheek and attenuated form of his lovely child with alarm and anxiety. He had great faith in Mr Medicott—and Mr Medicott prescribed change of air and scene—and what change of air and scene was so natural as that proffered and pressed on their acceptance by the Misses Norrys? Adelaide wished so much to see her sister again—they urged; and they were so desirous of doing all in their power for Adelaide's sister, and for Mr Brandon, that even if Fordyce had wished to decline the invitation, it seemed like ingratitude to do so. But Fordyce was indifferent where she went, so that she could often see her father; and the fresh terrible sorrow had eradicated from her memory the remembrance of that former visit to Lisbourne, when she had prayed it might be her last. Home was so dreary now, though she tried to bear up bravely for her father's sake: it was desolate to walk out in the dull square, and it was desolate to return, and the large rooms looked so gloomy, and she started at the sound of her own footsteps. At Lisbourne, too, she would see so much of the kind, dear Medicotts, and of Anna Norrys, who had always corresponded with her departed mother, and called that dear mother one of her most valued friends; so, upon the whole, Fordyce felt rather more inclined to be at Lisbourne than elsewhere; and oh, what a comfort it would be if she found a sister in heart, to fill up the dreary void which a mother's loss had occasioned!

But there was no change in Adelaide Brandon. At nineteen, she resembled the child—cold in manner, supercilious, plain in person, but vain and perfectly self-possessed. Adelaide entertained so high an opinion of her own qualifications in general, that she could afford to extend patronage towards a younger and less-favoured sister, whose ancestry on the maternal side did not equal hers—a fact which had been impressed on the mind of Adelaide Brandon since she could comprehend anything. Her mother was a Norrys—a Norrys of Lisbourne House; but as to Fordyce, she could claim alliance only with poor Mrs Medicott—a nobody! Mr Brandon's reputed wealth gained for his daughter a prestige and consideration; though the Misses Norrys disliked her beauty, or rather, would not allow it existed: as to her sweet yielding disposition, they were prejudiced against the mother, and extended the prejudice to the daughter; but the wealth—that was not to be overlooked—that placed Fordyce Brandon more on an equality with Adelaide. In the congenial society of Anna Norrys, the young mourner found so much comfort, that she did not experience the chill which otherwise might have fallen so painfully on her warm, confiding heart. Adelaide was distant and polite; but Fordyce thought it might be only her outward manner. The Misses Norrys were very considerate and courteous; and Mr Norrys betrayed some agitation when he first beheld her, Fordyce had grown so like Mary Ringles! Mary Ringles, who had never, as Mrs Brandon, been invited to

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

Lisbourne House, and whose name was never spoken, seemed now to revive in her daughter. Little love they had had for the mother, and less for the child; but there was a powerful shield around that fair girl; and if she was not quite unconscious in what the shield consisted, she yet did not attribute to its magic influence all the toleration and urbanity evinced towards her by the proud and heartless family.

Mr Brandon was glad to obtain a respite from the cares of his career of anxious money-making, or money-losing, and to snatch a breath of pure air at frequent intervals during Fordyce's stay at Lisbourne. And so well did the visit go off, so affable were they all, that Mr Brandon readily promised that it should be often repeated, and expressed a sincere hope that his daughters would learn to love each other as sisters ought. Fervently was this hope cherished in secret by poor Fordyce, but her mind misgave her that it might never be so: every advance she had made to Adelaide was coldly though politely received; but then, thought Fordyce, she would try again and again—it was her duty to do so—and Adelaide might be hard to win; but if once won, what a depth of sisterly love might be hers! It was worth trying for; and Fordyce determined in her own mind that it should not be her fault if opportunities were wanting for their becoming better known to each other.

'And so you are soon coming to us again, dear Fordyce!' said Anna Norrys when the time of parting arrived: 'old Lisbourne has attractions for you, I see.'

Fordyce blushed deeply, and turned away.

Anna, though generally confined to her own room, knew everything that went forward, and her intuitive knowledge was wonderful, as if she could see through thick walls, and possessed the power of rendering herself invisible. She rested quietly and silently on her sofa in a darkened room, yet her words were listened to like oracles, and went straight to the hearer's heart, as if she had read everything that passed within.

'I know you will often be with us, Fordyce, my dear!' continued Anna, holding the young girl's hand fondly in her own: 'your father's house in that great square must be lonesome and dreary to you now. And how do you like the Arlingtons?' she added suddenly, as Fordyce turned away in tears. Again another blush and a pause, and the question was repeated: 'How do you like the Arlingtons?' ere Fordyce in a low voice replied:

'Very much: the Misses Arlington are so very elegant and accomplished.'

'And their brother Frederic; do you like him, too, very much, Fordyce, dear?' asked Anna in a careless tone.

Fordyce released her hand, and turned to the window, pretending to be busy examining some flowers, as she hastily said: 'Yes, of course, I like them all.'

But Anna had caught a glimpse of her face; and Anna sighed

to herself: 'Poor child, there is no fear of her not coming to Lisbourne now'—then adding aloud: 'Frederic Arlington is considered very handsome and talented, though a little overindulged, perhaps, as only sons too often are to their bane; he has just returned from the continent after leaving college, and you have not had time to judge of him yet: I forgot that, Fordyce, dear.'

'Oh, I have seen Mr Frederic Arlington two or three times—four times, I think,' said Fordyce hesitating, and striving to look unconcerned, and then she immediately began to talk of something else.

Anna laughed, and Anna's laugh was very soft and sweet; and Fordyce broke away from her side, half smiling and blushing more deeply than before, when Anna repeated the words: 'Four times! what a true account you have kept, Fordyce!' But Anna was privileged, and loved to joke in her own quiet way, when the silent mood was not on her, and the pain had relaxed in intensity.

But Anna's words were true; there was no fear now of Fordyce Brandon disliking to visit Lisbourne.

Sir Roger and Lady Arlington were near neighbours of the Norrys, Sir Roger having succeeded to his uncle, the late baronet, who had for many years resided abroad, leaving the patrimonial estate to take care of itself. The Arlingtons were a great acquisition to Lisbourne; for Lady Arlington was a gay, bustling personage, and the two young ladies were dashing equestrians, and pleasant spoken; and their brother Frederic, as Anna Norrys had said, was handsome and talented. Their house, so long shut up and deserted, was now usually filled with company; and the Arlingtons, when not entertaining visitors at home, were out visiting themselves. Lady Arlington, since her arrival at Lisbourne, had evinced a predilection for the society of the Misses Norrys, and had bestowed marked attention on Adelaide. Sir Roger was a harmless sort of person, and not much regarded either by his wife or daughters; seldom in anybody's way, and seldom thought of by anybody.

When Fordyce first came to Lisbourne House, after her mother's death, the Arlington family had been absent; but they returned in order to receive Mr Frederic Arlington on his arrival from abroad. Fordyce at once became the object of her gay ladyship's notice. Adelaide, with concealed scorn and vexation, felt this, though she could not but confess that her gentle sister shrunk from the rather obtrusive admiration which Lady Arlington openly expressed. 'Hers was just the style of beauty to captivate Fred—Fred was so fastidious!' The Misses Norrys looked displeased and stately; but Lady Arlington had a way of her own, and she rattled on, unheeding the cross old maids, as she designated the majestic ladies of Lisbourne House.

It was rumoured, indeed, that Sir Roger's affairs were involved—that he had an expensive, reckless family—and that her ladyship was on the look-out for a wealthy bride for her son, and wealthy

husbands for her daughters. They were really good-natured, merry creatures; and the contrast was so greatly in their favour, when compared with Adelaide, that no wonder Fordyce liked them, as she declared, 'very much.' They were very kind and attentive to the fair mourner, for they loved their own mother, and sympathised in her loss; and altogether they were so much heartier and more agreeable than her connections at Lisbourne, that Fordyce felt as if they were quite old friends, whom she had known for years. Mr Brandon was delighted with Lady Arlington, and with the free and foreign air which distinguished both herself and her daughters; and when her ladyship volunteered to be Fordyce's chaperon in town, his gratitude was unbounded; and when Mr Brandon expressed his desire that Adelaide should share in this advantage, the Misses Norrys no longer refused their sanction.

Fordyce, as she had told Anna Norrys, had seen Frederic Arlington only 'four times' ere she left Lisbourne for her father's house; but those four times had been sufficient to secure him an interest in her thoughts. The young man appeared greatly struck with her surpassing beauty; and the mourning attire, which suited its melancholy or pensive character, even rendered her more interesting. There was no affectation of grief; Mrs Brandon had scarcely been dead twelve months, and the child's heart was still in the mother's grave, and *her* days of mourning had not expired. Mr Brandon, however, thought differently; of late, he had betrayed a degree of restlessness and avidity for society, which had never before been observed in him; and he constantly alluded to the necessity of his daughters being well introduced, and intimated that he meant to turn over quite a new leaf, and to render his house as attractive and gay as possible. This was a pleasant hearing for Lady Arlington and her young people; and as Fordyce was the ostensible head of such charming arrangements, and Miss Brandon would be only a guest, it behoved them naturally to shew deference to the merchant's heiress, whose will, no doubt, was law in her father's house. Adelaide, with cold hauteur of manner, but real pleasure, looked forward to the gaieties of a London season, rendered more peculiarly delightful by the chaperonage of such a person as Lady Arlington; nor did *she* forget that Frederic Arlington, in consequence, would be oftener thrown in their way. But the young man had scarcely appeared to heed the presence of the plain elder sister—his eyes and ears had been all for the lovely young Fordyce. This admiration was extremely flattering, his taste being reckoned immaculate by the world in general—at least by *his* world—and Lady Arlington and her girls took care to tell Fordyce so. Fordyce was not perfect; on the contrary, she inherited her full share of woman's weakness and love of approbation. Frederic Arlington's voice softened when he addressed *her*, his dark eyes spoke a language which made *her* heart throb faster, and all his attentions were most delicate and refined; he seemed to try and win her from her sorrow by means which had never been tried by

others, and which she could not analyse, but which she felt so grateful for, that when he left her side, sunshine seemed to leave it too.

There was one of the family who did not extend a very cordial hand of welcome to Mr Frederic Arlington, and on more than one occasion had been heard to mutter the word puppy: this was Mr Norrys, whose antiquarian researches continued unabated through winter cold and summer heat, and whose head for some years had been running on Queen Anne farthings, to the exclusion of most other ideas. He wanted one to make his collection complete; and whenever he encountered a stranger, the subject uppermost on his mind was sure to be broached forthwith. Frederic had been guilty of an ill-suppressed smile of ridicule, and while he voted the old gentleman a bore, the coin-collector voted him an ignorant puppy.

Mr Brandon, with feverish haste, redecorated his house, and requested Fordyce to appear in brighter colours; he was sick of black, he declared, and wanted cheerfulness. A great change had come over Mr Brandon: there was a flush upon his face, and an unsteady light in his eye, which perplexed, and yet pained his daughter; he was irritable too, even harsh in his manner sometimes, and seemed to seek for perpetual excitement abroad, if they had not company at home. But Adelaide came on her promised visit, and Lady Arlington and her family established themselves in a convenient house, quite near, though seldom were they found there, but more frequently at Mr Brandon's. Lady Arlington planned numerous entertainments, to be given on a scale of expense and elegance that Fordyce thought *almost* unnecessary; but as Mr Brandon defrayed the expense, of course her ladyship was profuse in ordering and advising, playfully telling Fordyce, 'she must not be stingy—she, a prince-merchant's heiress!'

Frederic Arlington was rarely absent; he attended Fordyce with unremitting devotion; he had not yet *spoken* words of love, it is true, but he *looked* and acted them; and Fordyce was well content he should not *speak*, she was so dreamily happy, so supremely blest in his silent love. She trembled lest the blissful spell should be broken by a word. In crowds they were alone; she saw only him; she forgot Adelaide's hauteur and coldness, which increased instead of diminishing; and, in short, Fordyce saw all things through a bright medium. She knew *his* footstep from all others when he approached her, she felt *his* eyes were on her; and, enthralled and captivated, the spoken word was only wanting. But the spoken words were still withheld; why, it seemed not easy to guess. Mr Brandon was a looker-on, and encouraged the intimacy between his daughters and the Arlingtons, more particularly he encouraged and noticed Frederic's devotion to Fordyce; there was no pretext for silence, but still he spoke not. Lady Arlington was a keen woman of the world, and Frederic, her son, was not a whit behind his mother in

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

observation and acuteness, where their own interests were concerned. Certain rumours—faint, distant, strange rumours—had reached the ears of Lady Arlington and Frederic—rumours so indistinct and incredible, that they were almost inclined to disbelieve their own sense of hearing. But there was no harm in *waiting*—that could do no harm to any one, argued her ladyship, for Frederic was secure of the young creature's heart; and the heart—oh, that was a bagatelle—the heart of young ladies was easy to bend and easy to heal.

'Do not commit yourself by speaking, Frederic,' said his prudent mother; 'wait till the season is over: there is a crisis at hand, I am sure; for do you not notice Mr Brandon's odd, absent manner, and almost wild expression sometimes? The reports that are flying about of his reckless speculations, which must either ruin him or make him a Croesus, are no doubt based on truth; and he has cause enough for anxiety. You cannot marry a penniless girl—you know that well, Frederic; it would, therefore, be cruel to speak just yet—besides, she is so young, and you are but a boy yourself.'

Frederic smiled, paid his mother a gallant compliment as to her youthful looks, and added with a half-sigh: 'As to the cruelty, mother—go how things will, she *knows* I really like her better than any one else, and I am sure she returns my preference.'

'Ah, Fred,' sighed Lady Arlington with a shake of her head, 'you're a sad fellow, and have many broken hearts to answer for, I'm afraid. However, you have two strings to your bow; for even if Mr Brandon's fortunes fail, there is Adelaide, independent of her father, and the heiress of her three aunts' wealth, and old Norrys's, too, if she marries to please him. I don't know whether Adelaide wouldn't have been better for you, after all,' mused Lady Arlington, as if speaking to herself.

'She's such a plain girl,' remarked Frederic quietly, 'otherwise I am not sure that I altogether dislike the hauteur and stateliness of her manner: she has rather fine eyes too; but who could look at her when the lovely Fordyce is nigh?'

'She is a sweet girl, certainly,' replied Lady Arlington; 'and for your sake, Fred, and for hers too, poor young thing, I'm sure I sincerely hope all may go well with her father's money affairs. But have you ever had a suspicion, Fred, my dear, that Adelaide is not so cold to you as to others?'

'Well, perhaps I have, mother,' rejoined Frederic, looking at his handsome form in the glass with much complacency; and the youth walked away, followed by the eyes of his admiring and partial mother.

And it was to *him* the innocent, ardent Fordyce had given her heart! But there were depths in that heart, and a strength in her character which Frederic Arlington could not fathom or understand. The woman's hour had not yet come for exaltation through suffering and endurance.



'Who can that big awkward-looking fellow be who is talking to your sister, Miss Brandon?' said Mr Frederic Arlington one evening to Adelaide, raising his eye-glass with a supercilious air in the direction signified. 'If good Mr Brandon was not so choice in his guests, I should think there was some mistake in his being here. I have never spoken to the fellow, though I've seen him here before.'

There was something Adelaide did not quite relish in this speech of the baronet's son; for Mr Brandon was her father, and consequently, she upheld his pretensions and dignity; so she answered with considerable haughtiness: 'He is one of my father's clerks, and greatly valued by Mr Brandon, I believe, on account of his many good qualities—at least, so I have heard my sister Fordyce say. Indeed, he has lately been promoted, and manages the business in some measure; nor can I think him awkward, as you describe, but particularly gentlemanlike in his movements, though very ugly certainly.'

'He seems to know your sister very intimately, upon my word,' pursued Mr Frederic Arlington, scrutinising the pair with his eye-glass; 'and what is the name of this worthy clerk, pray?'

'His name is Timothy Bedford,' replied Adelaide, still coldly—for could it be possible Frederic Arlington was jealous?—'and he is some distant relative of Mr Medicott's, the surgeon at Lisbourne. My sister's mother, you may remember, was a relative of Mrs Medicott.'

This was said with a very slight degree of spite, which did not escape him to whom it was addressed. 'Yes,' said Frederic, slightly colouring, 'so I have heard: they are worthy souls the Medicotts. And Mr Timothy Bedford is a relative of theirs? Now I look at him nearer, he seems very care-worn and anxious—tied to a desk, poor devil, I suppose, from morning to night.'

'Yes,' replied Adelaide; 'he has worked his own way, and is most industrious, my sister Fordyce says; and Mr Brandon has him here as much as possible, he is so fond of him.'

'Humph!' exclaimed Mr Frederic Arlington. 'Mr Timothy is at home, I can see;' and he went up to Fordyce, who was conversing in a low tone with her father's clerk, and looking rather pale and jaded. 'I am sorry to interrupt an apparently interesting conversation, Miss Fordyce,' said Frederic, 'but the harp is vacant, and I am dying to hear you this evening.'

Irresolutely for a moment she looked towards her companion, and then hastily taking Frederic Arlington's offered arm, she said in her sweetest tone: 'Mr Bedford is so fond of really good music, that we must persuade my sister Adelaide to sit down; it is indeed a treat to hear her performance;' but Mr Bedford looked as if he would far rather hear Fordyce; and there was something about his honest face so pleasing despite its plainness, and something about his whole bearing so dignified, quiet, and unpretending, that Frederic felt as if he began to hate him from that moment,

and his whole aim was to turn the unconscious offender into ridicule.

He whispered to Fordyce, as she sat down to her harp, in an ironical voice: 'Your friend Mr Timothy being a musical amateur, no doubt appreciates Italian; therefore favour us with that, will you?'

'Oh, Mr Bedford doesn't care for Italian, unless executed in first-rate style,' replied Fordyce with perfect simplicity; 'and I always sing our own dear old ballads to him, for he would be sorry to hear me expose my poverty both of voice and accompaniment.'

'Upon my honour, Miss Fordyce,' said Frederic Arlington in a tone of pique, 'you study Mr Timothy's taste more than he deserves, if he accuses you of poverty either in voice or style.'

'Mr Bedford is all truthfulness,' replied Fordyce; and glancing at Frederic with an arch smile—'he never condescends to flatter.'

'You entertain a vastly high opinion of your father's clerk,' exclaimed Frederic coldly. 'I think he might be well content with whatever music you selected for him to have the honour of listening to: it is not often servants are treated with such consideration in their master's house.' The speaker waxed warm as he concluded this speech, and began to turn over the leaves of a music-book in a hurried manner.

'Servants! masters!' cried Fordyce in amazement. 'Who are you speaking of, Mr Arlington? Mr Bedford is a gentleman of education, though he is my dear father's clerk, and my father's friend; too, as well,' she added with emotion.

'Was it of your father you were speaking when I interrupted your tête-à-tête with Mr Bedford, then?' asked Frederick in a low voice, bending over her, and gazing tenderly on her flushed cheek.

Fordyce looked up, met his impassioned glance, and with a trembling lip whispered 'Yes;' then commenced immediately the prelude of an Italian air, far too difficult for her to attempt with any hope of success.

Mr Bedford had drawn near, and when the last chord was vibrating, he alone kept silence, while all around were repeating their thanks to the young hostess for her exertions. She looked towards him, and shook her head, faintly saying: 'I have failed!' and in return he smiled, shewing most beautiful white teeth, certainly, and shaking his head in return.

'Confound the fellow's impudence!' muttered Frederic as he stalked away in high disdain. 'What a self-possessed puppy he is!'

'Puppy' to be applied to the manly, straightforward, good Timothy Bedford! Fordyce with quick tact—the tact in which her sex are so seldom deficient—at once saw something had gone wrong with Frederic; and partly divining the cause, and—oh, strange enigma of woman's heart!—not disliking her proud lover for this display of temper, though she was herself the kindest-

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

hearted creature in the universe, after establishing Adelaide and the Misses Arlington at the harp and piano, she withdrew to a distant corner beside her father, pretending to be an interested listener to his conversation with Sir Roger Arlington on political economy. Mr Bedford watched her movements for a little time, and was about to seek her side, when Frederic advanced with a sheet of music-paper in his hand, for the ostensible purpose of asking her to decipher the manuscript. Timothy Bedford sighed; and when Frederic was stooping over it, and they were both apparently engrossed with the study, with one long fond look at the fair girl, whom he secretly loved with all the fervour and passion of his manly heart, Timothy Bedford quietly left the room and the house. Beneath the stars in the open square he seemed to recover breath, for he had felt suffocation creeping over him; and pressing his hand on his throbbing brow, as he raised the hat from his head, an inward prayer found vent in the words: 'God grant he is worthy of her, and that he may prove so when the hour of trial comes! and it is not far off from us all. O that I could avert the ruin, and save her!'

Great was the crash and general the dismay when the house of Brandon & Co. fell to the ground, and people exclaimed about the uncertain tenure of worldly wealth. Many were drawn into the vortex of ruin, and the downfall spread bewilderment and consternation far and wide. Poor Timothy Bedford's few thousands, which he had embarked in the vast concern, were swallowed up and forgotten as a drop of water in the ocean. He did not vent reproaches or complaints, however, though his advice had not been followed by his principal; who had become deeply imbued with the love of commercial gambling, the result of which was so disastrous. Yet Mr Bedford had to begin life anew; he had an aged, helpless grandmother totally dependent on his exertions for support, and he had toiled in Mr Brandon's service with unremitting energy. It was hard on him, poor fellow, and on many others besides, for Mr Brandon had latterly played a desperate game, blindly shutting his eyes to the chance of fortune proving false, and deserting him at the terrible crisis. Stunned by the blow, the unhappy merchant, after feebly attempting self-destruction, had been struck down by a fit of paralysis; and now deprived of articulation and the use of his limbs, he lay in hopeless impotency, a wreck of humanity. In a small lodging, tended by the gentle, devoted Fordyce, whose true womanly energies were now called forth, Mr Brandon, after lingering for a few months, breathed his last. She was alone during her trials, with no one near to console and cheer save Mr Bedford, who stole every moment he could from his own pressing affairs to tend and solace his former patron. With the affection of a brother, and the delicacy of the most refined mind, Timothy Bedford tenderly watched over the young girl, whose sudden fall from affluence to penury, borne so uncomplainingly, might

have touched a less warm and feeling heart than his. It is true the Norrrys of Lisbourne sent condolences in formal letters and also pecuniary gifts; but they did not come in person—perhaps that was too much to expect—for they were greatly shocked and surprised at the turn of affairs. Adelaide also sympathised by letter with her sister; and Fordyce was grateful for all this kind feeling; but there was something more wanting. Where were the Arlingtons? Before the crisis, they had escorted Adelaide back to Lisbourne; and their names were never mentioned now, except once by Adelaide, who merely said that Mr Frederic Arlington had gone to Paris for a short time with his mother and sisters. No sympathy from them—no notice; and yet her father's munificence had but lately anticipated their most extravagant whims and wishes, her brilliant home had been at their service to go and come as they pleased. But it was an old story, and often told, yet read by Fordyce for the first time; and she was so entirely engrossed with her father, that excepting a certain chill which crept over her when she thought of Frederic Arlington's desertion in her deep distress, there was no outward sign of disappointment or despair.

Prepared for Mr Brandon's death, regarding it as a release from earthly suffering, Fordyce with silent resignation knelt beside her expiring parent; she never forgot the hand that gently raised her when all was over, and Timothy Bedford never forgot that on his sympathising bosom she shed the first flood of uncontrollable tears that came to her relief. With the respect due to a queen, he ever approached the lovely mourner—no word, no sign, no look, betrayed the passionate emotions of his soul; and Fordyce was accustomed to consider and to call him the 'best creature in the world,' and 'good Timothy Bedford.' Even beside her father's coffin, she was prepared to make excuse for her lover's silence. It could not be his fault, O no! Frederic was a dutiful son, and it was his parents who had intervened, and probably considered it not decorous that he should intrude his presence under the circumstances. But then he might have written: even that omission Fordyce tried to believe was not meant unkindly. She recalled his parting gaze, his half-whispered words, the ardent pressure of his hand, and a thousand other trifles remembered only by love; and the poor girl's bright day-dreams returned, again to fade into the dim mists of uncertainty.

But Lisbourne House was to be her refuge for the present; there was no other shelter to which she could resort with such propriety; and the Misses Norrrys, with conventional decorum, had signified as much. The circumstances of Mr Medlicott had not improved as time progressed; and besides, it would not have been decorous that Miss Brandon's sister resided with the Medlicotts, excellent folk as they were! Then as to governessing, which Fordyce hinted at in her strong desire for active independence, it was quite an insult to hint at such a thing; the bare idea of Miss Brandon's sister being a governess almost caused the grand old

ladies to faint outright! There was no alternative; but the heart of the girl sank at the prospect before her—well for her she did not see its full extent. Yet her treacherous, vain human heart whispered that Frederic Arlington must see her there, and it was impossible they could meet without explanation. Impossible? Poor Fordyce, what a lesson you have yet to learn!

'You will come and see me sometimes at Lisbourne House, dear, best Mr Bedford,' sobbed Fordyce when they parted, holding both his hands in her own, and wondering why he trembled and turned away; 'and I shall see you, too, at the dear Medicotts, shall I not?' she continued; 'for I know you often run down to be with them from Saturday till Monday.'

Timothy muttered something about his grandmother not liking him to leave her; but Fordyce said he could come if he liked, and he must come; so Timothy promised he would. And when Fordyce was alone, she fell into a reverie, and suddenly starting up, exclaimed aloud: 'I must be a vain creature to think that!' She blushed beautifully too, though alone, and looked quite angry with herself; but what the 'that' was of which she hinted, did not transpire; and as Fordyce was so young, and had been brought up as an indulged only child, which means of course a spoiled one, it is possible her thoughts were not always very wise, or her reasoning perfect.

There was an elaborate politeness, a palpable condescension in the Misses Norriss's reception of the orphan, which said more plainly than words: 'We are determined to do our duty, however disagreeable it may be.' Stiff and repellent they ever were; it was their nature, and they could not help it; but their stiffness and repulsiveness were more endurable than the forced amenity and humiliating condescension with which they greeted the pale and shrinking Fordyce. She turned from them to Adelaide—to her father's daughter; but Adelaide's face wore a triumphant expression, which ill accorded with her sombre garb of wo, and which was not understood by Fordyce—that revelation came afterwards—while her cold civility, and still colder kiss, froze the sinking heart of her on whom it was so unwillingly bestowed. In Anna's quiet chamber, the poor destitute orphan found refuge and comfort: here she sobbed convulsively, for before them not a tear escaped—she was calm and silent, but the first tender word and look opened the floodgates of her pent-up sorrows, and long and bitterly she wept. Anna allowed her to weep unrestrainedly, merely pressing her passive hand, and whispering those little scraps of sweet comfortable assurances which have, for the purposes of consolation, no equal. As Fordyce listened and wept, by degrees her tears ceased to flow, she sobbed less violently, and her spirits became more tranquillised. The very atmosphere of Anna's darkened room was soothing; the world seemed not to enter there; and the white-robed form always reclining on the same couch, the pallid face, the low voice, and

bright, clear intellect of the patient sufferer, invested her with an interest and an influence that was quite apart from worldly pursuits. The Misses Norrys regarded Anna as a saint, as a martyr; but then she was a Norrys, and where was the wonder? Mr Norrys pronounced Anna to be a woman of profound learning, because she knew the whole history of the Lisbourne ruins, even better than himself, and to her he always applied for dates and information. But Anna could not change the nature of her sisters; she could not instil grave and high purposes into her brother's mind; and all she could do was to amend and ameliorate, where amendment and amelioration seemed requisite. Adelaide always felt uncomfortable and awed in her Aunt Anna's presence, consequently her visits to the sick-room were made as seldom as decency permitted. Anna rarely inquired for her, and, indeed, coveted solitude so much, that it was esteemed quite a boon by all the family to be asked for by Anna, and permitted to pass a little time by her side. An hour's conversation with the guileless Fordyce, and Anna knew her heart's history; unconsciously Fordyce laid open the wounds, unconsciously she betrayed the hopes, unconsciously she revealed the deep passionate affection garnered in that heart. Anna knew she must probe ere the cure could be effected.

'I must break the truth to her, poor child,' thought she; 'it will be more merciful than to let her learn it from Adelaide, who would exult, I much fear, in the agony she inflicted: it would be cruel kindness to spare her now.' She led Fordyce to speak of her father, of the good Timothy Bedford, and of the silence of the Arlingtons, but Frederic individually Fordyce could not be induced to name; she avoided that name, so inexpressibly dear, and Anna felt her self-imposed task was a bitter one. By degrees, Anna told of Sir Roger and Lady Arlington's wish to be allied to the Norrys family, and the necessity of Frederic having a bride whose portion was ample. Fordyce started as Anna spoke, but for a moment, and then all was still—a feather falling might have been heard. Anna proceeded to tell of Frederic's expected immediate return from the continent with his mother and sisters, and as the accepted suitor of Adelaide, though the marriage was not to be solemnised yet. He had written to make the offer of his hand, and Adelaide had accepted it, with the full concurrence of Mr Norrys and the Misses Norrys—Mr Norrys having been propitiated by the gift of a *bond fide* Queen Anne farthing from 'the puppy' Frederic Arlington, now no longer 'the puppy,' but 'the connoisseur.' When Anna ceased speaking—and she spoke as if detailing common-place occurrences, in which her hearer had no vital interest—there was profound silence. Fordyce sat in deep shadow, a little behind Anna, and her face was hidden from observation. She did not sigh, or moan, or move; but she felt very cold, and a shiver ran through her frame. 'You do not make any comment on the

tidings I have communicated, my dear,' said Anna, raising herself on her elbow and moving uneasily: 'to me you may be silent, but remember, you will be expected to offer congratulations to my sisters and your sister ere many hours are over.'

Fordyce essayed to reply, but words failed her; she felt certain that Anna knew her heart's history, and deeply sympathised in the agony she had inflicted—inflicted in mercy, forewarned being forearmed. Anna clasped the cold hand which sought hers; 'Fordyce, dear child,' she said, 'I could have wished that your sister Adelaide had made a different choice: there is small prospect of happiness for her.' Fordyce winced, but Anna resolutely proceeded: 'Frederic Arlington is not a man to make any woman happy; he is thoroughly selfish, heartless, and unprincipled, and actuated solely by mercenary motives. Fordyce,' continued Anna, changing her tone abruptly, 'when I was your age, I had a dream of love. Did you ever hear your mother speak of an only brother who left friends and country before her marriage with your father?'

'Yes; but she seldom named Uncle Aspinax Ringles,' whispered Fordyce. 'She told me he had occasioned great distress and trouble to all his family and connections.'

'Alas! he did indeed,' sighed Anna; 'but, self-exiled, his memory has passed away. From these windows, Fordyce, I used to listen to his flageolet among the old ruins—for we were romantic then; afterwards came sorrow and sickness—a life-long sickness for me, and pain of body cures romance. But the hour of everlasting rest draws nigh, and the shadows deepen towards the west.'

Fordyce listened in breathless attention, and Anna's kind aim was accomplished: Fordyce was drawn from the contemplation of her own misery and cruel disappointment; and in the confidence bestowed by Anna Norrys, she knew her own crushed heart had found kindred sympathy and companionship.

Forewarned and forearmed—Fordyce, hitherto a timid, shrinking girl, suddenly felt herself transformed into the decided, observant woman, ready to encounter difficulty and emergencies with a quiet but courageous spirit. Frederic coming to Lisbourne as the accepted lover of Adelaide! How would he greet her whom he had deceived and deserted? Fordyce was astonished at her own composure, when she reflected on the painful and trying position in which she found herself placed; it was a composure founded on scorn for the offender, though Fordyce would have disavowed such a feeling as bordering on resentment. But it was not resentment—it was simply a calm and lofty disdain, mingled with bitter anguish. Years had been added to her age in a few moments; and from the height of that pedestal on which her feet were firmly planted, Fordyce looked down with innate superiority on the false and mercenary being to whom she had so readily given her first sweet affection. Yet was her poor heart a sad ruin; she had set up an idol there, and had found the shrine defaced, and

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

the image shattered, while at the same time arose the conviction in her mind, that she had wasted her energies on false worship. With the conviction came desolation of spirit, when the whole world seemed a vast howling wilderness. She could not then see, far away, a rosy sheltered pathway, whither her footsteps might stray when the strength of the wintry storm had expended its fury on her defenceless head.

Adelaide was greatly astonished at the composure and unaffected self-possession of her sister's demeanour, when the Misses Norrys, with considerable pomposity and perspicuity, acquainted her with the important fact of Mr Frederic Arlington's engagement to their niece. They knew nothing of his former attentions to Fordyce Brandon, consequently, they regarded her short and merely conventional congratulations as a matter of course. But with Adelaide the case was far different; with triumph and ill-concealed malignity expressed in her forbidding countenance, she had watched and waited for a display of agitation or passion on the part of Fordyce, which came not: her triumph was not half complete without this. She could not be mistaken in her belief that Fordyce had loved. Adelaide had admired and liked Frederic Arlington too well herself to be deceived in another. Fordyce had loved him then; and what stuff was she made of, to receive thus calmly and dispassionately the tidings of his betrothal to Adelaide? The stuff was such as Adelaide could not see through—genuine, strong, unyielding, and yet delicately pure and fine. Fordyce felt she was closely watched; but the worst was yet to come when he arrived: he, too, perhaps, would note her looks, and she shrunk from encountering his piercing eyes. What a fiery trial would be hers! how could she dare hope to pass through it unscathed? How great, then, was her surprise, her relief, when the fashionable Mr Arlington, with high-bred, careless nonchalance addressed her as a mere common-place acquaintance, evidently intending, by his own ease, to make her feel at ease too, and at once and for ever to annihilate any presumptuous hopes she might have entertained concerning him or his former attentions. He did not display one moment's awkwardness, although he had certainly a difficult part to play; but Frederic Arlington was at home in his part—he had learned it by rote, and felt confident and sure of success. Beyond his most sanguine hopes, Mr Frederic Arlington succeeded with one of his audience at least. Fordyce Brandon had no fear for herself now or evermore. Had he shewn one particle of heart, of embarrassment, of annoyance, at finding her domesticated there, she would have distrusted her own strength; but as it was, how completely the idol was shattered! The Misses Norrys admired Frederic's Parisian elegance; how charmingly he paid his devoirs to Adelaide, his affianced bride; how delightfully amiable and clever he was; never was such a paragon as Mr Frederic Arlington!

With anxious tenderness, Anna Norrys had watched the



effects of this dreaded crisis on Fordyce : she felt satisfied so far, that the dear girl had conducted herself nobly ; but even Anna Norrys, keen as her perceptions were, failed to discover if the wound inflicted was incurable. 'I think not,' she murmured to herself. 'Had death, or any hopeless barrier, separated Fordyce Brandon from the object of her love, then had the wound proved mortal. But the unworthiness of Frederic Arlington she will survive, and happily too, or I am much mistaken.'

Continual excursions were planned with the Misses Arlington—Adelaide shewing to much advantage on horseback, and Frederic as attendant cavalier always at her side. Lady Arlington and her daughters received Fordyce in the same style as Mr Frederic Arlington had done, with an ease and carelessness excellently well acted, and with an evident determination to avoid any reminiscences, or any approach to a scene. They were polite and cheerful, but nothing more ; they did not wish to mortify her, but any approach to intimacy must now be avoided. This was all well for Fordyce—it was all healing—painful while the smart lasted, it is true, but still good, substantial, wholesome healing!

A favourite topic with Anna Norrys was Timothy Bedford's excellences of disposition and character : she never tired of descanting on his goodness and sterling abilities ; Mrs Medicott had told her so much about him, and Fordyce spoke of him as of a dear brother too. With Anna Norrys and the Medicotts, Timothy Bedford was a perfect hero ; his unselfish, dutiful devotion to an aged, helpless grandmother ; his generous disposition, truthfulness, probity, and warm affectionate heart, were all discussed in turn. Fordyce loved to listen to these praises, and she had her own peculiar tale to add of his kindness and generosity to her father and to herself ; but of herself, Fordyce liked not to speak—she always dwelt on Mr Bedford's forbearance and goodness to her lost parent. Timothy had called two or three times at Lisbourne House, and his reception by the Misses Norrys had been condescendingly gracious, swayed by the opinion of Anna. They pronounced him to be 'wonderfully genteel for his position.' Adelaide did not recognise her late father's clerk, or pretended not to do so ; but, with supercilious impertinence, stared in his face, and turning to Mr Frederic Arlington, who was present, began a whispered conversation.

Timothy Bedford did not appear in the least disconcerted or annoyed by these vulgar slights ; he looked very happy and contented, despite his loss of fortune and the toilsome uphill work before him. Indeed, his happiness and contentment had commenced since Mrs Medicott informed him of Adelaide's approaching marriage with Frederic Arlington ; and it had increased after each succeeding interview with Fordyce. He came so often to see the good Medicotts, that Mrs Medicott seriously told him, she 'hoped he was not neglecting his grandmother, for that was not like him !'

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

Timothy laughed, and replied that old Mrs Bedford urged him to get a breath of pure Lisbourne air whenever he could; 'but if you're tired of me,' added Timothy smiling, 'why, that's another thing.'

'Tired of you, my dear boy!' exclaimed Mrs Medicott. 'Ah, Tim, you know better than that. But I suspect the attraction which draws you here; only remember, my dear boy, that you have nothing, and your old grandmother, moreover, is a heavy drag on you; and that Fordyce Brandon belongs to a proud and mercenary race, and there is little hope for you in that quarter.'

This was said very gravely, for Mrs Medicott was glad of the first opportunity of 'warning' Timothy, as she said; but the warning came too late, as such warnings generally do; and Timothy Bedford would not have lost one smile from Fordyce to recall his lost thousands.

'A little hope supports me,' said Timothy smiling—he had a habit of smiling, perhaps to shew his resplendent white teeth; 'and if I dared hope to win Fordyce Brandon for my wife, it is of small account to me that her race, as you call them, are proud and mercenary. I have youth, health, energy, and some talent for business, and we are young enough to wait; and if I might presume to entertain the faintest hope of calling her mine at the end of many probationary years, there is nothing I could not undertake and succeed in; for when one is determined to succeed, failure seldom ensues. To give her a happy home, to remove her from the ungenial atmosphere of Lisbourne House, would indeed be the summit of earthly felicity.'

Mrs Medicott listened and approved, and finally melted into tears at Timothy's vehemence; and she took every pains to facilitate his views, by endeavouring to throw the young people in each other's way. Fordyce passed her happiest hours in Mrs Medicott's sunny parlour: genial kindness and sincere love rendering doubly cold the grand home, to which the poor girl always returned with a sigh. It is true Anna Norrys was a refuge from the cutting slights and cold civilities of the others; but, then, Anna could not endure the presence of any one for long together, and the refuge in her quiet chamber formed a mere exception to a general rule.

Who may fathom the change wrought in that young creature's feelings and character during these months of trial and endurance? As gold purified in the furnace, so she came forth elevated and more precious from the fiery ordeal; the petted, indulged, wayward child of prosperity, gradually became the self-relying, much-enduring, patient, heroic woman. Adelaide's marriage was fixed to take place in autumn, it being now early spring; the lawyers, of course, were tardy in drawing out the settlements, and besides, the Misses Norrys could not make up their minds to part with the 'darling angel' before that period. Adelaide inherited her mother's fine fortune, and the fortunes in expectancy

of uncle and aunts; no wonder the settlements were voluminous, or that the Arlingtons were charmed with dear Frederic's choice. Adelaide paraded before Fordyce all the glories of her enviable position, but she failed in provoking the gentle sister, whose undeviatingly kind and affectionate manner might have gained for her the good-will of any save a jealous woman. Adelaide was jealous of her sister's beauty, accomplishments, and sweet demeanour, but a thousandfold more jealous of Frederic's well-remembered devotion, when Fordyce reigned a queen in her father's magnificent mansion. 'She's a poor-spirited thing,' thought Adelaide Brandon: 'I am sure *I* wouldn't bear what she does so meekly. And yet those blue eyes of hers haunt me sometimes; there is something so mournful and holy in their expression, and so full of pity, too, as if she pitied me and my failings: her impudence indeed! However, Frederic's treatment of her is mortifying enough, and serve her right, too, for ever daring to raise her eyes to *him*.'

'Who the deuce, Medicott, is that queer-looking fellow I've seen lately prowling about the ruins?' asked Mr Norrys of Mr Medicott in rather an excited manner. 'He seems always to avoid me—and he's like a wild Indian more than a civilised being, so covered with hair, that scarcely an inch of face is visible. A queer fellow—very: do you know anything of him in Lisbourne?'

'By your description, sir,' returned the doctor—and there was covert humour in his twinkling little eyes—'I should rather think it must be a Doctor Hooliloo, who is staying at the little inn at Lisbourne, and, I believe, is a connoisseur, like yourself, in antiquities, and a great coin-collector.'

'A coin-collector!' vociferated Mr Norrys; 'and why didn't you inform me of this fact before, Mr Medicott, that I might have paid my respects to Doctor Hooliloo? I do not, I confess, much admire his poking about on my property, though, of course, the ruins are public to all; but as he is a coin-collector, he must have motives for searching about, and no doubt he has heard of the prize I discovered years ago. I shall make a point of addressing him, next time I find this Doctor Hooliloo in my neighbourhood.'

'He's a very shy man,' returned Mr Medicott: 'he introduced himself to me a few days ago for professional advice; he has been many years among savage tribes, and even in California; and hence his wild unprepossessing appearance. Truth to tell, Doctor Hooliloo has a vast contempt for civilisation in general, which he denominates hollowness and vanity.'

'Ah! he's a philosopher, I see, Mr Medicott,' pompously returned Mr Norrys. 'Has he any rare coins with him, do you know?'

'I rather think not,' replied Mr Medicott. 'His collection is too vast to be carried about with him; he deposits his treasures in a secure place.'

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

'Upon my word, Mr Medicott,' said Mr Norrys, 'your acquaintance, Doctor Hooliloo, is worth my knowing. We brother-collectors have a kind of free-masonry among us, which soon draws us together in the bonds of fellowship.'

'He's a very shy man, as I before remarked,' said Mr Medicott. 'I get him to my house, for my old woman has a kind way with her, which makes him at ease and comfortable; but I doubt your getting him into Lisbourne House, sir—the grand ways there would frighten a man whose days have been passed among the savages.'

'Well, well, my good friend,' returned Mr Norrys, flattered and mollified by Mr Medicott's speech, 'we shall see. I dare to say, I shall meet this shy collector among my own old mounds. The memories of the past connected with the Lisbourne ruins are very interesting to philosophic minds, and I have no doubt Doctor Hooliloo is properly touched when he contemplates them.'

'I fancy, sir, he is very much touched,' observed Mr Medicott; and bidding the astute Mr Norrys good-morning, he trotted off on his rounds.

'I must know this person,' said Mr Norrys to himself. 'I may get a wrinkle from him. I'll be bound he doesn't possess a Queen Anne farthing!'

It was, however, as difficult a process to catch Dr Hooliloo as if he had been a wild squirrel, leaping from mound to mound and from tree to tree; and the dignified Mr Norrys at length gave up the attempt in despair, and contented himself with watching the movements of the stranger at a distance. These movements were neither rapid nor frequent, unless he was disturbed; for Dr Hooliloo's occupation seemed to consist in smoking a long foreign pipe, stretched at his ease on a green bank of turf; but if any one approached, however stealthily—for the philosopher's perceptions of hearing were no doubt quickened by his Indian habits—then Dr Hooliloo as stealthily, and far more rapidly, glided away to some other shelter, like a noiseless snake winding through the long grass amid the arches, and buttresses, and odd hiding-holes with which old Lisbourne ruins abounded.

But Mr Norrys was not to be balked: here was a coin-collector whose treasures were so valuable that they were deposited in a secure place, and Mr Norrys not to know him! It was monstrous, absolutely monstrous. So Mr Norrys took up his walking-stick, and honoured Lisbourne village with his presence, causing unwonted commotion in the little inn when he inquired in a peremptory and sonorous voice if Dr Hooliloo was at home. Dr Hooliloo was out, and the visit was not returned; Mr Norrys waxed wrathful, and told Mr Medicott that he considered himself insulted.

'I told you, my dear sir,' replied the pacific doctor, 'that he is very shy, and wild and eccentric in his habits. He attaches no value whatever to any private collection of coins, and is so

perfectly satisfied with his own, that I do not think he would feel the least interest in yours.'

'But he hasn't a Queen Anne farthing, Mr Medicott, and do you mean to say he, as a coin-collector, would despise *that*?' exclaimed Mr Norrys, considerably piqued and excited.

'I mean to say, my dear sir,' replied Mr Medicott, 'that Doctor Hooliloo is so wrapped up in his own affairs, and is so satisfied with his own coins, that he would neither admire nor covet yours.'

'He must be an egotistical booby, then, that's all I can say for him; and I suppose his residence among the savages must excuse his want of breeding,' drily remarked Mr Norrys.

'That's just it,' returned Mr Medicott; 'though he's no fool; and has a deal of good in him, and he is not selfish either, for he talks of giving some of his coins away soon.'

'Giving away his coins!' shouted Mr Norrys, 'after all the trouble and anxiety of collecting them; then he *must* be a fool, or they must be worthless!'

'They are of the usual value,' said Mr Medicott smiling complacently, 'and he will give them to those who will take care of them.'

'Humph!' ejaculated Mr Norrys, 'I should like to have the picking and choosing of a few for myself.'

'And I am sure,' continued Mr Medicott, smiling benevolently, 'that if you needed them, sir, Hooliloo would be most ready to bestow as many of his coins as you required.'

'You speak in enigmas, Mr Medicott,' replied Mr Norrys with dignity, 'and I don't understand your joke, sir.'

'I am not joking,' said Mr Medicott with the utmost urbanity; 'but time will explain the enigma—"Time the revealer, Time the consoler," as my old woman says; and *she* thinks no harm of Dr Hooliloo, I assure you, sir.'

'I bow to the opinion of your excellent wife,' said Mr Norrys gallantly; 'but if I ever do succeed in catching hold of your hairy friend when he is fumigating the old ruins with his nasty tobacco, I'll tell him my mind, Mr Medicott, that's all;' with which terrible threat the conversation terminated.

Fordyce felt half afraid of the strange and taciturn man who sat by Mr Medicott's fireside, and regarded her so earnestly, that she became quite confused beneath the prolonged scrutiny; yet there was nothing offensive in these regards—the look was mournful and retrospective, and he listened to her words with such evident interest and pleasure, that Fordyce soon became accustomed to his wild and shaggy appearance, and would even venture to question Dr Hooliloo respecting the wonderful sights he had seen, and the wonderful adventures he had encountered, during his intercourse with the savages. Dr Hooliloo had fine expressive eyes, and a musical voice; but the eyes were shaded by a profusion of dark dishevelled hair, and a beard of unusual length covered the lower portion of his face. His speech was terse and metaphorical, as

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

if he had been much accustomed to hold converse in languages whose idiom differs materially from ours; his metaphors all tended to expose the false polish and glitter of society in general, and to deprecate the social system of which we are the slaves. As to Timothy Bedford, he shared the scrutiny and observation which Dr Hooliloo bestowed on Fordyce. Timothy's hand was grasped as in a vice by the doctor's sinewy fingers—a token of approbation which Dr Hooliloo only bestowed on prime favourites; and that Timothy was a prime favourite with his eccentric friend no longer remained a matter of doubt, when the latter used all his powers of eloquence to persuade Timothy to return with him to the solitudes of savage life, or to the wilds of California. Timothy glanced at Fordyce, laughed, and said he could not leave his old grandmother. Dr Hooliloo's eagle eye detected the glance, and he said sententiously: 'The ancient mother and the fair young maiden may accompany us; there is room in my home for all, and plenty of food.'

Fordyce blushed, but said nothing; and Timothy thought he had never seen her look so beautiful.

Summer had almost begun to fade into autumn, when a sudden and alarming change in Anna Norrys caused Mr Medicott to look anxious and grave, and to signify his wish for further advice. The physicians who were consulted at once corroborated Mr Medicott's view of the case; and the family were gently informed that it was impossible the sufferer could survive many weeks. Anna desired to be fully acquainted with the opinion of her medical advisers, and Mr Medicott, thus urged, tenderly divulged it. 'I am thankful the summons home is so near,' she whispered calmly. 'I am more ready to go than to stay, for rest from pain and weariness is welcome as daylight to the night-watcher.'

Adelaide pouted because her marriage must necessarily be deferred; and the Misses Norrys, with forms erect and solemn visages, consoled each other, and studied Blair's Sermons. Fordyce, in mute grief, sat hour after hour by her dear departing friend; for Anna, now her earthly days were numbered, wished to see those she loved more frequently beside her: she had much to counsel and to say during those quiet hours, and she spoke with some difficulty. The words of the dying insure attention, and enforce reverence from all; and Anna's parting words to Fordyce Brandon were almost like commands, for the orphan's future happiness was Anna's last care. She sounded the depths of the girl's heart, and with inexpressible comfort found that treasures of love and hope were still buried in its recesses, only requiring time and patience to bring them forth.

It had been a beautiful warm autumn day, and Anna's chamber-window was open to admit the pleasant evening air, which came loaded with the perfume of clematis, and many sweet garden-flowers. Fordyce watched the stars, as slowly they began

## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

to appear in the cloudless sky; and Anna continued sleeping, for she had slept much during that day, and had been slightly delicious. Suddenly, a prolonged wailing note, as of a flute or flageolet, filled the apartment, coming from the direction of the old ruins, which bounded the garden, and on which the windows looked. Again it was repeated; and Fordyce then distinctly recognised a plaintive melody which had always been a favourite with Anna. She was wondering who the musician could be, when Anna softly pronounced her name, and on reaching the couch, Fordyce found her eagerly leaning forward in the attitude of excited attention, her eyes fixed on vacancy, and her countenance wearing the ghastly hues of death. 'Hush!' she murmured, as the sounds became clearer—'hush! that is my summons: he calls me as he used to do, and the sad dream of separation is over.' She fell back exhausted, and the music ceased. Greatly alarmed, Fordyce summoned the family, but Anna never spoke again; and that night she ceased to breathe, passing away in a quiet slumber. Anna's remains were interred in the family-vault in Lisbourne church-yard; and during the funeral obsequies, when the mourners were assembled round the grave, a bare-headed stranger stood near them, in whom Mr Norrys recognised Dr Hookiloo. His head was bowed, and he appeared deeply affected; on the conclusion of the solemn ceremony, he walked slowly away, nor was he again seen in Lisbourne, saying farewell neither to Fordyce nor Timothy Bedford, but leaving a letter for the former, to be opened and read by Fordyce in the presence of Mr and Mrs Medicott. Surprise almost prevented her from deciphering the straggling writing, and what with her tears and blushes, and agitated exclamations, it was some time ere she arrived at the end. When she did so, throwing herself into Mr Medicott's arms, Fordyce in a burst of emotion exclaimed: 'And you knew all this, and yet you never told me he was my Uncle Aspinax! O how generous, how noble of him! and may I never thank him, never see him more!'

'No, my dear child,' said Mr Medicott, trying hard to speak calmly, with a choking sensation in his throat—'none of us will see him again in this world, in all human likelihood. Aspinax Ringles hates to be thanked, and it was his wish to avoid both that and recognition. He has gone back to his life in the wilderness, and only came to the haunts of civilisation with his Californian gold, in order to make restitution to me whom he had wronged, and to ascertain his only sister's fate. You, my dear child, were her representative, and of course the handsome fortune he intended for her is yours.—And he says something else in his letter—doesn't he, my dear?' continued Mr Medicott smiling, as he brushed away a tear from off his furrowed cheek.

Fordyce blushed and stammered, and then hurriedly put the letter in Mr Medicott's hands. 'May I shew it to Timothy?' he asked demurely. Fordyce was silent; but Mrs Medicott now

broke in : 'Of course you may, my dear John, as Fordyce doesn't say no. Silence always gives consent.'

'Ah ha! that's orthodox, is it, in all love-matters and such like?' cried the old surgeon, rubbing his hands in glee.

But the contents of the letter did not explain all, for it had reference more to Fordyce and her union with 'honest Bedford'—for so the writer denominated Timothy—than to the writer himself. It was from Mr Medicott that Fordyce gathered the remaining particulars : how Aspinax Ringles had sent for him to the little inn at Lisbourne, and how Mr Medicott had promised to preserve his incognito, and to call him Dr Hooliloo, that being the name bestowed by the Indians on their great medicine, whose knowledge of the medicinal use of herbs had won for him his diploma among the aborigines ; while his musical voice, which they fancied resembled the notes of an Indian song-bird, known by some such appellation as the hooliloo, had gained for him the cognomen which he continued to adopt. Very lightly Mr Medicott touched on the early attachment of Aspinax Ringles and Anna Norrys ; of her brother's stern displeasure ; and finally, of the misguided man's subsequent reckless course, which had separated them for ever in this world.

Fordyce remembered the episode of the flageolet, and recounted it with tears, it was such a touching trait in the disposition of that rough, toil-hardened being.

'Ah, poor fellow !' sighed Mrs Medicott ; 'he was faithful to Anna's memory ; and though he dared not look on her changed face again, yet he wished her to know before she died that she was well remembered. After the funeral, he destroyed the old flageolet, and took himself off in a hurry, for he said that he should never rest until far away from the haunts of civilised men. I'm sure I hope he'll be comfortable, poor dear, among the savages, now he's been home, and unburdened his mind, and paid all his debts,' added Mrs Medicott with infinite simplicity and fervour.

'Poor Uncle Aspinax !' cried Fordyce ; 'had I but known the truth, perhaps we might have succeeded in persuading him to remain with us.'

'No, my dear girl,' returned Mr Medicott gravely, 'you never would. His habits are too confirmed to admit of change, and he always, even in his young days, expressed a wish to lead a wild life. It suits him well, depend upon it ; and it is best as it is, all circumstances taken into consideration ; and the only thing you can do in order to please your Uncle Aspinax, is to obey the instructions contained in his letter.'

Timothy lost no time in pleading his own cause ; and Fordyce was too grateful to her Uncle Aspinax, to prove disobedient to his earnestly expressed wishes for her union with 'honest Bedford.'

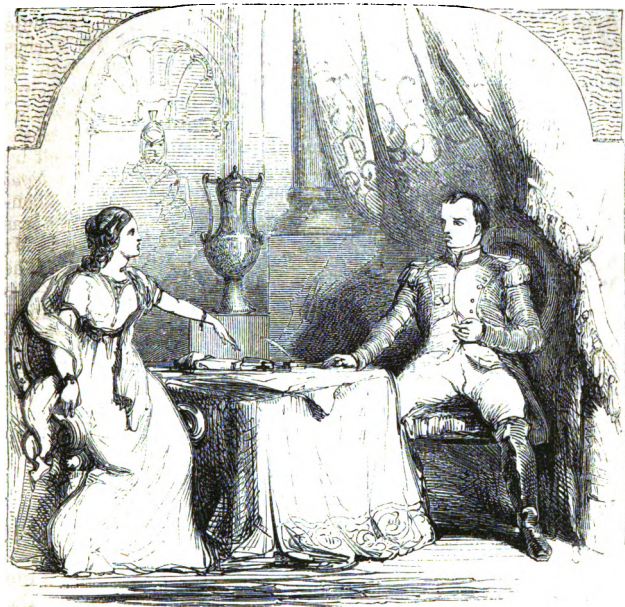
Anna Norrys left a will dividing her fortune equally between Adelaide and Fordyce Brandon ; and when the conventional term of mourning expired, Frederic Arlington led Adelaide to the



## THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS.

hymeneal altar ; and shortly afterwards Fordyce became the wife of Mr Bedford. Mr Medicott gave her away, for Mr Norrys continued sulky, not altogether relishing the deceit which, he declared, had been practised on him relative to Dr Hooliloo being a brother coin-collector. Mr Medicott, however, stoutly defended himself, and boldly affirmed that he had spoken nothing but truth, for that Aspinax Ringles had an undoubted right to call himself by his Indian name if he liked ; and moreover, that he was a *bond fide* collector of coins on a large scale ; and that he had given a considerable portion to those who knew how to value them. It was a famous joke for the facetious Mr Medicott ; but the sedate Mr Norrys of Lisbourne House seldom condescended to joke. The Misses Norrys also were of opinion that Fordyce Brandon—as Adelaide's sister—rather demeaned herself by marrying an individual, however worthy and respectable, who had once been her father's clerk. Nevertheless, in process of time, Sir Frederic and Lady Arlington, who did not live together on the most amicable terms, were glad to accept invitations to the hospitable and princely mansion of Timothy Bedford, the prudent and prosperous merchant, where Fordyce presided, as radiant in happiness, kind in heart, and brilliant in beauty, as in the days of her early prosperity. Thither, too, often came Mr and Mrs Medicott, as the most honoured guests, the doctor having retired from active life, owing to the infirmities of age creeping on. With unwearied patience, and a ready smile, Timothy listened to Mr Medicott's oft-repeated joke about Dr Hooliloo ; while Mrs Medicott quite eschewed fictitious romance, and declared there was nothing like the romance of reality.





## MADAME DE STAËL HOLSTEIN:

### HER LIFE AND WORKS.

**I**F Napoleon was the greatest man of his time, Madame de Staël was no less the most eminent woman. If he, beyond all men who have ever lived, was subtle in contrivance, strong of will, and daring in exploit—she, as a woman, was the most original thinker, powerful writer, and eloquent talker, the world has yet produced. Even setting sex aside, we doubt whether they may not be said to differ less in the actual amount than in the nature and direction of their individual powers. Both were giants, both intensely desirous of fame and glory; but his was a cold-blooded egotistical ambition, that united with contempt for his fellow-men, and could take

no rest until he saw them under his foot; hers, a generous and loving enthusiasm, that could enjoy no distinction unaccompanied by the conviction, that in raising herself, she was helping to elevate the whole human race. And hence the continual jar between them, his hatred of her, and the tyrannical persecution which imbibited and shortened her life. There was, nevertheless, in her high moral patriotism and purpose, a clear and distinct voice, which, though overborne and inaudible amidst the *éclat* of his first military glories, was afterwards eagerly listened to, and had no feeble share in discrediting, and finally undermining his empire. Unfortunately, the recognition came too late for her safety. Like Macbeth with Banquo, he felt 'that in her royalty of nature reigned much that would be feared,' that 'under her his genius was rebuked, his sceptre barren;' and less scrupulous than his prototype, he dared 'with bare-faced power to sweep her from his sight, and bid his will avouch it.' It was the over and over again struggle—the old barbarian victory of physical might over intellectual and moral right. As she naïvely expressed it: she had nothing to conjure with except her poor genius, and for a time at least genius could avail little against a mounted gendarme.

A complete and faithful portraiture of Madame de Staël would be a desirable addition to literary biography; but the task will be a difficult one. The most ambitious attempt that has yet been made, even in her own country, towards setting forth the inner life and outward manifestations of this very remarkable personage, is the sketch of her character and writings by her accomplished kinswoman, Madame Necker de Saussure, which was prefixed to her posthumous works published by her son in 1820. The review or analysis there given of her numerous literary productions, is carefully and admirably executed, and contains some useful notes and explanations to be met with nowhere else. But the memoir makes no pretensions either to completeness or impartiality. It is an eloquent and affectionate eulogium, rather than a biography, impressing us throughout, somewhat too much, perhaps, with the cleverness, elegance, and fine moral tact of the author; and chiefly interesting as indicative of the large and important place Madame de Staël held through life in the hearts and minds of those who had the best opportunity of knowing her. Though enriched with many admirable illustrations, and containing an abundance of striking and varied characterisation which ought to place, and really does place, her heroine on the very highest pinnacle of human elevation, it must be owned that the effect, on the whole, of Madame de Saussure's elaborate notice, is rather to dazzle the eye by a profusion of luminous points and brilliant tints, than to satisfy it by the presentment of a carefully shaded and lifelike portrait. She succeeds much better in the sketches she attempts of the Neckers and other subordinate persons of the scene; but there is in her manner a certain air of rigidity and scientific

precision particularly unfitted for the delineation of the chief figure—of one so entirely out of the common mould—whose vast intellectual proportions seem to ‘lie floating many a rood,’ and of whom it may so well be said, that her ‘soul was larger than logic.’

We are, however, greatly indebted to Madame de Saussure for her affectionate labours. It would have been difficult, as she says with her usual elegance of expression, ‘to write Madame de Staël’s history while her contemporaries were yet on the world’s stage, to disengage her part from theirs, to select the bright thread of her course from the delicate and complicated tissue of the history of the present time.’ But from Madame de Staël’s own works, from her *Thoughts on the French Revolution* and *Ten Years of Exile*, especially, we learn many additional particulars, which, with the numerous and interesting notices of her by contemporary and succeeding writers, would now furnish materials for a tolerably complete biography. At present, we propose to lay before our readers as entire an outline of her eventful life and important works, as our ability and the limits of this paper will allow.

Anne Louisa Germaine Necker, afterwards Baroness de Staël Holstein, was the only child of M. Necker, the wealthy Genevese banker, and his wife, Susanna Curchod, a beautiful and accomplished Swiss lady. She was born at Paris in 1766, at the commencement of the most important era that has yet occurred in the history of civilised Europe, and was about ten years old when her father, who had been long distinguished as a financier and able writer on political economy, was called upon to fill one of the chief offices of the state, as Minister of Finance to Louis XVI. Although Mademoiselle Necker was by nature quickwitted, energetic, and affectionate, the accessories of her position and education must have prodigiously increased the power and vivacity of her natural faculties, and had great influence over her peculiar intellectual development. Perhaps there was never so excitable a child, or one so early and imprudently stimulated. Her father’s position, and the esteem in which he was held, with her mother’s beauty and talents, made their house the resort of the most intellectual society in Paris; and we have a picture of the precocious little wit at ten years of age, with brown complexion and bright black eyes, already sparkling with kindness and intelligence, surrounded by the chief men of the day, and eagerly listening to conversation on subjects far beyond her years. ‘By the side of Madame Necker was a little wooden stool on which sat her daughter, obliged to hold herself very upright indeed. Scarcely had she taken her customary place there, when three or four gentlemen of the company came up and accosted her with the tenderest interest. One of them, who wore a little bob-wig, took her hands in his, and held them for a long time, conversing with her as if she had been five-and-twenty. This was the Abbé Raynal; the others were Messrs Thomas, Marmontel, the Marquis de Pesay, and Baron von

Grimm. At table, you should have seen how she listened; not a word did she utter, and yet she seemed to be speaking, so much expression did her flexible features display. Her eyes eagerly followed the looks and motions of those who spoke, as if to seize the ideas before they were uttered. She took an interest in all that was said, even on political subjects, which at this time were the leading topics of conversation. . . .

'After dinner, came more company; and every one, on approaching Madame Necker, had a word to say to her daughter of compliment or raillery. She answered all with perfect ease and grace. They took pleasure in attacking her, embarrassing her, and in exciting that little imagination, already so brilliant.' Extraordinary treatment this, it will be agreed, of a little being already so brimful of sensibility, that 'the praise of her parents would fill her eyes with tears, and the mere sight of a person of celebrity cause her heart to palpitate!' But M. and Madame Necker, though devoted parents after their respective fashions, seem to have been as little prudent as they were of one mind in respect to their daughter's upbringing. The mother is everywhere described as a noble-minded woman, of fine understanding, and accomplished, though somewhat formal manners. The daughter of a Protestant clergyman in the canton of Bern, she had herself been so carefully trained, and had acquired so much by profound study, that she had, unfortunately, become convinced that there was nothing in natural bent, and everything in a proper method. In the last degree true to her principles, she studied herself, society, individuals, the art of writing, of housekeeping, and above all, that of preserving the purity of her principles; then reduced all these to system, and from this system deduced precise rules for the regulation of her conduct. No great wonder, then, that, as Madame de Saussure allows, 'there was a stiffness in her and near her,' and that her daughter should have respected rather than loved her.

The father, on the other hand, though full of benevolence and practical wisdom in general, appears to have been somewhat self-indulgent as a family man, and even slightly capricious towards his model-consort. She is said to have possessed his love, confidence, and admiration in a high degree; but we suspect a less pretending woman might have suited and pleased him in a yet higher degree. Indeed, he confided to Madame de Saussure one day, that the only fault he had to Madame Necker was her faultlessness — 'that there was nothing to pardon in her.' He was solemn and reserved in society, perhaps as much from caution as profundity; was probably tired of being always wise, and would, not unnaturally, have preferred unbending and being amused rather than edified in the leisure of his home. Instead, therefore, of shewing an ardent interest in the ingenious speculations of his accomplished better-half, he rather discouraged her zeal; actually prohibited her from spending her time in composition; would not allow her to have a writing-table in the room, in case he might at any time

be annoyed by the fear of interrupting her ; took a mischievous pleasure in thwarting her in the education of her daughter ; and, in short, shewed himself to be quite as selfish and intolerant as the most ignorant and narrow minded of men.

But from the first, there seems to have been an affinity even stronger than is usual between the father and daughter. As a child, he adored her, could not bear her to be out of his sight, or to have her contradicted ; was perpetually caressing her, joking with her, and encouraging her in her wildest sallies ; and afterwards took the deepest interest in her growing powers, considering her throughout his life as the first of women. And her love for him was manifested equally early. It seemed to grow with her growth, assumed the evervarying tints of her ardent temperament and brilliant genius, and may be said to have been the ruling passion of her entire existence.

Our Gibbon, the historian, had an attachment to Madame Necker in her girlhood, and proposed to marry her, but broke off the match. We hear of him afterwards as a constant visitor and cherished friend of the Necker family in Paris. Mr Carlyle, in his *History of the French Revolution*, accounts for the marriage not going forward, by a supposition that 'his father most probably kept his own gig, and so would not hear of such a union ;' and he humorously pictures the future Madame de Staël as ' romping about the knees of the Decline and Fall—Necker not jealous.' Whether she ever romped, however, seems to be doubtful. She is said to have had a premature youth instead of infancy ; and, indeed, the only childish trait recorded of her, is in a proposal she gravely made to her mother at the age of ten, that she should marry Mr Gibbon for the purpose of securing to her parents the gratification of his society !

In accordance with her mother's system of education, she studied assiduously from her earliest days. She not only listened to literary and political conversations, and witnessed theatrical exhibitions of all kinds before entering her teens, but had even then begun to exercise her understanding by literary composition. She composed eclogues and portraits. At fifteen, she made extracts from the *Spirit of Laws*, with observations, and wrote a very remarkable letter to her father on his publication of the *Compte Rendu*—an account rendered to Louis XVI. of the exact state of the public funds—which he recognised from the fervency of its style. The Abbé Raynal tried to prevail on her to write something on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes for his great work.

Nor was the element of novel and romance reading wanting to complete this unique education, in the selection of which Madame Necker, more severe than vigilant, did not always preside. Nothing was so delightful to the young mademoiselle, as to shed torrents of tears over the sufferings or noble traits of fictitious heroes and heroines, many of which her lively and ardent imagination completely realised. The carrying away of *Clarissa Harlowe* always

appeared to her to have been one of the real events of her youth. It is no wonder, then, that a *régime* calculated to give intense and unnatural activity to the intellectual and moral being, should have injured the physical powers. Dr Troughin is called, and prescribes total relaxation from study, and to pass the whole day in the open air with a youthful companion. An entirely poetical life succeeds. The two young ladies wander delightedly amidst the thickets of St Ouen, clothed as nymphs or muses; recite verses, compose poems, and write and act plays. Life is saved, and bodily health restored. But the new *régime* offers nutriment in still greater abundance to the imagination,

‘ And pours it all upon the peccant part.’

Madame Necker was vexed and disappointed at this breach in the routine of her daughter's education. To give up the regular acquisition of knowledge was, in her opinion, to renounce all hope of distinction. She had none of the pliability which enables us to vary our means. She is said to have conquered nature too successfully, to have been much under the dominion of instinct. The charms of her daughter's infancy had, therefore, had but few attractions for her, and now that she was unable to train her reason according to preconceived ideas and rules, she could no longer take an interest in the work as her own. What was worse, she could not repress a feeling of jealousy when she witnessed the delight her husband took in their daughter's quick-wittedness and originality of expression—qualities so opposite to her own, that she could not flatter herself he was admiring and loving her over again in her offspring. In truth, though the young lady had inherited many of the distinguished mental qualities of her mother, as nature had, in addition, lavished on her the gift of a brilliant genius, it is not wonderful that she soon outgrew her preceptress. She had the same ardent mind, strong feelings, love of the beautiful and sublime, and value for talents and eminence of every kind; but becoming every day more and more conscious of powers within herself, of which, as it seemed to her, her mother's lessons rather restrained than assisted the natural and perfect development, she grew impatient and distrustful of minute rules and methods; and though still dutiful both in conduct and demeanour, was inclined to go over to the opposite extreme in opinion, and to believe that all might be achieved by a good heart and happy spontaneous impulse. She desired, therefore, to become the representative of the natural, as her mother was that of the acquired qualities and endowments; and this idea, though but half formed and imperfectly followed out, perhaps too long influenced her judgment.

But let us try to picture our heroine, as large-hearted, sanguine, and impulsive, she now stood on the threshold of her remarkable career. Beautiful she could not be called—her features were too strong for that; but she had splendid eyes, and long dark eyelashes, a lively colour, and altogether an animated flexible countenance, in

which her bright thoughts and evervarying emotions were visibly depicted. Wonderfully eloquent, graceful in her movements, and with something peculiarly touching in the cadences of her finely modulated voice, her ideas, gestures, and words were all in perfect unison. Too benevolent and generous herself almost to comprehend the nature of hatred, envy, or uncharitableness in others, she seemed to enter life with a feeling of confidence that bade defiance to fate. It was in the first bright dawn of the Revolution, a great impulse had been given to thought in general, and new hopes for mankind were agitating the best and most earnest minds of her own and other countries. All Frenchmen seemed then to be actuated by a sincere and disinterested enthusiasm, public spirit had become general, and this brilliant creature appeared to be the very genius of the times—born of them and for them. The love of glory, of liberty, the natural beauty of virtue, and the charm of the tender sentiments, were the passions of her soul and the sources of her inspiration. Of a man so richly endowed, it might safely have been predicted that he would command the love and sympathy of every generous mind. But, alas! such remarkable gifts seem to be unsuited to the very nature of woman, and must ever carry with them the fatal destiny of unhappiness. Goethe's simile of the oak planted in a china vase, exactly fits the case: the strong spirit breaks down the delicate wall of conventionalities which environs her. And of what avail are the burning thoughts, the breathing words? Her position, in spite of herself, clings to her still, is part of her, and will ever render her powerless; for active man, from jealousy, will not listen to her, and women shrink from her as no longer of them!

It is perhaps unprofitable to speculate on the probable difference that a marriage of affection would have made in the happiness of Mademoiselle Necker's life. But her love for her father rose almost to idolatry, and she was so easily led by her affection, so ready to invest its possessor with the warm lights of her own glowing imagination, that the influence and support of a husband, the object at once of her love and perfect esteem, might certainly have altered the whole colour of her destiny. This best blessing and most powerful safeguard of woman's happiness was not, however, in the list of her advantages; she had but the ordinary chance of a *mariage de convenance*. It might have been worse; for, though twice her age, and quite unsuited to her, she was not unhappy with her husband. Her father, as it is said, *forced* her to make a judicious choice; and at twenty years of age she became the wife of a Swedish nobleman of high character—the Baron de Staël Holstein, then ambassador at Paris from the court of Gustavus III. This marriage gave her the rank and independence her father desired for her. He probably foresaw approaching troubles in France, and considered that the baron's diplomatic position there would be a protection to his household.

Though it is far from our present purpose to enter into the events



of the Revolution, we must mention that at the time of his daughter's marriage, M. Necker had been for some years in retirement. He had lost his place by aiming at a system of economy distasteful to the courtiers of both sexes; had taken up his abode at St Ouen, his country-house, two leagues from Paris, and had been afterwards exiled from thence forty miles from Paris, by a *lettre-de-cachet*, in consequence of having defended his honour against the groundless accusation by M. Calonne, the minister, of having understated the actual amount of the national expenditure in the *Compte Rendu*. As he had done much to ameliorate the abuses of unequal taxation, and his wife had devoted herself throughout his whole ministry to the improvement of charitable institutions, his retirement from office had been generally regretted, and the news of his banishment very ill received. All Paris had rushed to St Ouen to condole with him, every country-seat at the prescribed distance had been placed at his disposal, and his persecution converted into a triumph. But M. Necker was a real patriot; and as he had faith in himself, he was greatly discomposed at having been obliged to resign office at so critical a time. During the seven years which elapsed between his first and second ministry, he was in a state of perpetual chagrin at witnessing the overthrow of all his plans for the improvement of France by equal taxation and a wise economy. On his recall in 1788, he had all but lost hope that the government could now be saved from the threatened complete disorganisation; and when Madame de Staël, who, in spite of her fears and clear-sightedness, fondly hoped that everything would yet go right were her father once more at the helm of affairs, eagerly flew to St Ouen to apprise him of his nomination, he received the news almost in despair. 'Ah,' he said, 'it is too late! Had they given me the first fifteen months of my retirement! but power at this crisis is only a tremendous responsibility.' He, however, obeyed the king's orders.

Burke says in one of his writings, that 'M. Necker was recalled; like Pompey, to his misfortune, and like Marius, he sat down on ruins.' He was certainly not sanguine himself; but it is Madame de Staël's fixed opinion, that at the date of his first recall, had the aristocratic party made anything like reasonable concessions to the growing spirit of the times, even agreed freely to give up its exemption from taxation, all the evils and horror of the Revolution would have been averted. The time had come when change was necessary and absolutely inevitable. Louis XVI. was weak rather than tyrannical, and but for the clamours and tenacity of the nobility, would have been content to reign henceforward like the king of England, a constitutional, and no longer an arbitrary monarch. 'A great revolution is at hand,' said Monsieur—afterwards Louis XVIII.—to the municipality of Paris; 'and the king, by his views, his virtues, and his supreme rank, ought to be at its head.'

Famine, added to long and grievous oppression, had roused the tamest spirits to the demand of immediate relief, and a better

representation of their rights ; and the king had so far attended to the signs of the times, as to consent to the doubling of the people's representatives. M. Necker, the advocate and representative of the *juste milieu* policy, came back in time to watch over the interests of all parties. At his return, he found the prisons full, the treasury empty, and the people starving. He induced the king to give up *lettres-de-cachet*. By immense exertions, and the noble sacrifice of his private fortune, he was able to restore the public credit, and in some degree to ameliorate the horrors of famine ; and he drew up a plan of constitution, which, if immediately put in operation, would have insured the gratitude of the Tiers Etat, then eager to rally round the king. But the nobles—particularly the provincial *noblesse*, were too ignorant and prejudiced to be so easily taught to recognise their true interests. Cabals abounded on all sides. The king, timid, vacillating, and unable to place dependence on the army, was privately worked on to seek the assistance of foreign troops ; and factious obstacles were thrown in the way of the meeting of the States-general. The patriot Necker is again dismissed ; the dangers of anarchy grow every day more imminent and threatening ; Necker is again recalled, again dismissed, and again borne back in triumph ; but this time certainly with no hope of being able to avert the total overthrow of the throne, and of all existing institutions. We need not go on.

During this interesting period, Madame de Staël lived an excited and not unprosperous life. The fervours of her filial affection were duly responded to, and she had seen her father, if for a time overborne and misunderstood, repeatedly borne back to his high office, cheered by general applause, and his faithful services to his country warmly recognised. In spite of the harassing occupation of his mind by the most important affairs, she had the comfort of seeing and listening to him constantly, and of feeling that association with her was soothing and supporting to him. She had not expected to find that felicity in her marriage she knew so well how to picture ; but she respected her husband, and took the tenderest interest in her children. She was in the very flower of her youth. With her sociable heart, and remarkable powers of conversation, it is no wonder that she had an exquisite relish for society, or that her reception in the brilliant world of Paris should have been flattering in the extreme. Her literary reputation was rising through these years, gradually but steadily ; and as her writings, even the crude and imperfect sketches of her teens, were in their turns the depositories of her genuine feelings and convictions, we cannot but look upon them with the deepest interest. They are, indeed, the *facts* of her inner life, and accurately mark its progress. Her early taste was for poetry, embodying the finer sentiments of love, heroism, gratitude, and self-sacrifice. Sensibility and a tender melancholy, rather than violent passion, are its characteristics. Before her twentieth year, she had written a comedy in verse—*Sophia ; or Secret Sentiments* ; and several

tragedies. Two of these plays are among those published by her son after her death, as specimens of her early powers. But they were not written for the press. She used to read them aloud sometimes to parties of her friends, and with her remarkable command of intonation and expression, it is no wonder that, sketchy and imperfect as they are, they should have met with universal applause. While yet in her teens, she was also the author of three novels, said to be full of fine touches of sensibility and pathos. Like most youthful geniuses, her predominating aim at this time was to excite the stronger emotions. She, therefore, gives free scope to the deeply tragic vein which at all times pervaded her mind, and is far too prodigal of death and misery. She does not, however, seem to have attached much importance to these slight productions. They were not published for many years after they were written, and even then, not so much on their own account, apparently, as to serve as an occasion for giving to the world, by way of introduction, a well-considered essay on fiction, full of ingenious views and striking ideas. But the great effort of her youthful intellect was her letters on the character and writings of J. J. Rousseau. In these, she breaks ground vigorously, and first exhibits the full energy of her mind and the remarkable fertility of her thoughts. Indications are there, if sometimes rude, confused, and unfashioned, yet undoubtedly the veritable germs of all the opinions afterwards so distinctly developed in her maturer works. In trying to fathom the depths of her author, she also, perhaps for the first time, gained some idea of her own powers. Though he often inspires her with enthusiastic admiration, she is never carried away by him, but retains her independence of mind, trusts to her own convictions, and will accept nothing that she does not fully feel and appreciate. At this time, her intellect seemed with every day to add something to its athletic powers. She was a distinguished member of the brilliant society she has described, in which the interesting topics of man's moral and spiritual destiny were eagerly welcomed and discussed; the confused and tangled threads attempted to be unravelled, and the connection traced between it and the highest benevolence. A certain calm freedom seems to pervade these letters, indicating that the heart is yet untouched by passion; that the storms of life, if imagined, realised as possible, are yet too distant to have disturbed the pure atmosphere, or clouded the morning serenity.

But soon came the fiery ordeal. Inflamed from her birth with the love of true freedom, she had in her work on Rousseau paid her homage to liberty with the animation and warmth of a youthful devotee. Greatly admiring the English constitution, she saw in the dawn of the French Revolution only a promise that France would become as free as England; that her beloved countrymen would now be placed on the level of true men, secured in those rights and privileges which at once expand the intellect and elevate

the dignity of the human species. She felt that the hand of fate was on the curtain, and her sanguine imagination and warm heart readily supplied the grand drama now to be enacted. And if we consider her temperament and early training, and the belief which she fondly entertained, that her adored and honoured father was largely contributing to these inestimable benefits to mankind, we shall neither wonder at her enthusiasm nor at the shock her whole moral nature received on the downfall of her hopes. With a profound hatred of tyranny, and the tenderest sympathy with suffering, the Reign of Terror was to Madame de Staël peculiarly dreadful. She seemed to experience that bitterness of pangs, 'to be wounded in the house of her friends.' 'It seems to me,' as she afterwards touchingly expresses it, 'that the partisans of liberty are those who feel the most profound detestation of the atrocities committed in its name. Their adversaries, no doubt, may have a just horror of them; but as these very crimes furnish arguments for their system, they do not excite in them, as in the friends of liberty, grief of various kinds at once.'

During the reign of Robespierre, Madame de Staël was scarcely able to use her pen. Her whole faculties were absorbed in the eager desire she felt to rescue victims from impending death, and in scheming how to shelter and comfort the unfortunate. Nothing can exceed the interest of her own account of the events of these terrible days and nights. Situated as she was in the very centre of action, and elevated by her understanding to the height of those principles of liberty, in the name, but in reality in the abuse and degradation of which so much evil was poured out upon the human race, her excitement and suffering were only equalled by her exertions to rectify, sustain, and ameliorate. 'We seemed,' she says, 'descending like Dante, from circle to circle, always to a lower hell.' Her only literary exertion during these days of darkness was her tract in defence of the queen. She had never been a favourite with Marie Antoinette—her manners were probably too impulsive and direct to be successful at any court. But this made no difference, if it did not rather stimulate her generosity to greater exertions. The defence was written with the most delicate tact, yet with a force and eloquence calculated to touch even the hard hearts to which it was addressed. Soon after the death of Robespierre, Madame de Staël published two political pamphlets in favour of peace: *Reflections on Peace, addressed to Mr Pitt*, and *Reflections on Internal Peace*—the first of which received the praise of Mr Pitt in the British House of Commons. Both are important historical documents, containing much sound reasoning and some profound remarks and anticipations which seem to have been sagaciously prophetic of subsequent events.

While torn and agitated by the storms of this disastrous period, she tried to regain her composure of mind by employing her thoughts in an analysis of the passions, now so freely let loose all around her. In witnessing the blind fury with which ambition

and party spirit were fast overturning and treading under foot that virtue, reason, and liberty under the banners of which they had pretended to range themselves, it is no wonder that she looked on the whole movement of the passions as a fatal and destructive fever. In this work—*On the Influence of the Passions on Individual and National Happiness*—she characterises them so distinctly in their infinitely varied aspects, and minutely differing shades, that we seem to have placed before us a gallery of individual portraits, with which our experience is more or less familiar. Nothing can be more masterly than the analysis; and if she goes further in condemning as inimical to true happiness such affections as those of love, friendship, the desire of glory, and filial devotion, than any one except the renewed Christian has a right to do—it must be set down to the ravages and excess of the times, rather than to the want of human sympathy; for in general, no one had ever a finer perception than Madame de Staël of the point where the abuse of one rule impinges upon another no less important. To those who, by virtuous effort, are able to free themselves from the dominion of passion in all its forms, she holds out in this work such compensations as, a ‘calm and musing disposition, a tender melancholy, and a contemplative resignation.’ Cold comforts, alas! but at this time of her life, faith in and duty to God were not, as they afterwards became, Madame de Staël’s sheet-anchor and principle of action; and the inconsistency, as well as the faulty morality of the book, lies in offering nothing external, no higher motive than self, for the sacrifice of self. Instead of saying, ‘avoid all passion, because it will assuredly render you unhappy,’ she ought to have said, ‘watch carefully your passions, or they will render you criminal.’

It was not long after the publication of her book on the Passions, that Madame de Staël first saw the great disturber of her peace and enemy of her life. General Bonaparte had before this time been much talked of in Paris. He had shewn himself as remarkable by his capacity for business as for his victories; and the imagination of the French had begun to attach itself warmly to him. In the name of the Republic, he had rapidly and brilliantly conquered Italy; and though a few attentive observers even thus early suspected him of the design of making himself king of Italy, he was admired and trusted by many of the zealous and sincere republicans of the Directory, who would have regarded a man’s desiring to turn the Revolution to his own personal advantage as a shame and a degradation. Calculating on a reaction in the minds of a people weary of excitement and sacrifices, this able tactician wisely foresaw, that a breathing-time of peace would now be the most acceptable offering he could make to France. He therefore signed the treaty of Campo Formio with Austria—a proceeding which, as it contained the surrender of the Venetian Republic, was no less arbitrary than the partition of Poland—and arriving in Paris towards the end of 1797, may be said to have virtually begun

his reign. But his ambition was not at once apparent; there was a spirit of moderation and simplicity in his manner which inspired confidence. In the discussion of business he exhibited a certain quiet air of self-possession, which invariably commands respect; and there was a shortness as well as aptness in his conversational phrases, which gave them weight, and made them easily remembered and quoted.

In spite of her admiration of heroes, Madame de Staël seems never to have heartily liked or esteemed Bonaparte after she had made his personal acquaintance. At first, she was inclined to regard him with the utmost favour, for which she gives the womanly reasons that, 'besides his talents and bravery, he was said to be much attached to his wife, and was feelingly alive to the beauties of Ossian'—a poet for whom she entertained a violent admiration. But his cold egotism and want of generosity soon chilled her enthusiasm.

In examining the circumstances, we find no ground at all for Mr Ingersoll's ungenerous, and somewhat tardy attempt to defend Napoleon's unmanly and most unwarrantable persecution of her, by insinuations against her virtue. It is surely a little too late in the Bonaparte family to ask credence for the first time now to such an interpretation of the facts, which caused the more amiable Joseph Bonaparte so much shame and regret, and induced him to befriend Madame de Staël to the utmost of his power, while the victim of his brother's persecution. Such cruelties were not at all likely to be practised by a man towards a woman 'because she made love to him.' It ought surely to have been panoply sufficient for the 'superior chastity' Mr Ingersoll claims for his hero, that 'he treated her courtship not only repulsively, but contemptuously.' A rustic Scottish lover when roughly used by his mistress, pathetically exclaimed: 'Tho' ye dinna like a body, ye needna ding a body ower;' and even supposing Mr Ingersoll's base insinuation to have been truth-founded, poor Madame de Staël need not have been hated and hunted down to the death as she was. Even one so devoid of 'pity or ruth' as Napoleon, ought, from very self-love, to have overlooked a few symptoms of irritation in 'a woman scorned;' and he probably would; but this was not the cause: what he could not pardon in her, was her nobleness of mind, the attractions of her wit and eloquence, her true patriotism and hatred of tyranny, and greatest offence of all, that she rigidly abstained from praising him in any of her works. Meeting him frequently in society, and aware, as she appears to have been from the first, of his power for good or evil, it seems to us to give no colour to Mr Ingersoll's accusation of Madame de Staël, that 'she eagerly sought opportunities of conversing with him.' As money could not immediately be raised for the proposed conquest of distant Egypt, and he was anxious to do something without delay, calculated to keep alive the enthusiasm excited by his Italian successes, Bonaparte had then proposed to invade Switzerland. The pretext for this war was, the situation

of the Pays de Vaud, which being entitled to claim an independent existence, was oppressed by the aristocrats of Bern, and imprudently willing to accept of French assistance in making good its rights. Madame de Staël clearly saw that the terrible intervention of the French would necessarily hazard the whole independence of Switzerland—that beautiful and happy country, which had enjoyed repose for many centuries—her fatherland, and the asylum to which her parents had finally retired, when hopeless of being any longer useful to France, the country of their adoption. The cause appeared to her so sacred, that strong in her convictions and her eloquence, she was not without hopes that Bonaparte would listen to her plan in favour of it. They had several conferences together on the subject. He heard her to an end, but without the slightest effect; for, as she says, ‘Cicero and Demosthenes together would not draw him to any sacrifice of personal interest.’ The exhibition then made of her enthusiasm and eloquence, was, no doubt, only an additional reason for his dread and dislike of herself, and gives colour to an affecting remark of her own. ‘In every circumstance of my life,’ she says, ‘the errors which I have committed in politics have proceeded from the idea, that men were always capable of being moved by truth, if it was presented to them with force.’

At this time, Bonaparte wished to overturn the Directory, and substitute himself in its stead; but in spite of his general wish to be popular, for this object, he did not disguise his dislike to all female politicians, especially those possessed of wit and eloquence; and had Madame de Staël had such designs as those Mr Ingersoll imputes to her, she could hardly have thought the discussion of politics a hopeful route to his heart. ‘I saw him one day,’ she says, ‘approach a French lady, distinguished for her beauty, her wit, and the ardour of her opinions. He placed himself straight before her, like the stiffest of German generals, and said to her: “Madame, I don’t like women to meddle with politics.” “You are right, general,” replied she; “but in a country where they lose their heads, it is natural for them to desire to know the reason.” Bonaparte made no answer. He is a man who is calmed by an effective resistance.’

He had heard that Madame de Staël had at one of her own parties spoken strongly against the dawning oppression, the progress of which she clearly foresaw; and desirous of gaining her over to his interests, sent his brother Joseph, whom she had always liked, to talk to her. He said: “My brother complains of you. ‘Why,’ said he to me yesterday, ‘why does not Madame de Staël attach herself to my government? What is it she wants? The payment of the deposit of her father?—I will give orders for it. A residence in Paris?—I will allow it her. In short, what is it she wishes?’” “Good God!” replied I, “it is not what I wish, but what I think, that is in question.”” Of course, this answer would be reported to him, and would do her no good.

As Sweden had early acknowledged the French republic, the Baron de Staël resided constantly at Paris as minister, and it had been Madame de Staël's home for many years. But on Switzerland being threatened with immediate invasion, she quitted Paris in January 1798, and rejoined her father at Coppet. He was still on the list of emigrants, and as a positive law condemned to death emigrants who remained in a country occupied by the French, she was anxious about his safety, and hoped to persuade him to quit his abode. But he would not. 'At my age,' said he, 'a man should not wander upon the earth.' She imputes the real motive of his refusal to his reluctance to leave the tomb of her mother, who had died there four years before, and which he had never passed a day without visiting. Madame de Staël insisted on remaining to protect him, and thus describes her own terror when the troops appeared, which, however, was at this time groundless:—

'When the entry of the French was positively announced, my father and myself, with my young children, remained alone in the château of Coppet. On the day appointed for the violation of the Swiss territory, our inquisitive people went down to the bottom of the avenue; and my father and I, who were awaiting our fate together, placed ourselves in a balcony, commanding a view of the high road by which the troops were to arrive. Though it was the middle of winter, the weather was delightful; the Alps were reflected in the lake; and the noise of the drum alone disturbed the tranquillity of the scene. My heart throbbed violently, from the apprehension of what might menace my father. I knew that the Directory spoke of him with respect; but I knew also the empire of revolutionary laws over those who had made them. At the moment when the French troops passed the frontier of the Helvetic Confederation, I saw an officer quit his men to proceed towards our château. A mortal terror seized me; but what he said soon reassured me. He was commissioned by the Directory to offer my father a safeguard.'—*Considerations on the French Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 217.

This clemency was gratefully received by them both; and as, by the union of Geneva shortly afterwards, M. Necker became legally the Frenchman he had always been in his sentiments, Madame de Staël carried a memorial to Paris from him, requesting that his name should be erased from the list of emigrants, which was graciously complied with. She then tried to negotiate with the Directory for payment of the two million of livres which her father had left deposited in the public treasury. The government acknowledged the debt, and offered payment out of the estates of the clergy, which Necker, with his usual nice sense of honour, refused; not, as she says, that he meant thus to assume the colours of the party who consider the sale of that property illegal, but because he had never in any situation wished to make his opinions and interests coincide, in case there should be a possibility of the slightest doubt of his entire impartiality.



Madame de Staël's mind was now lightened of the anxiety she had long suffered on her father's account; and being out of sight of Bonaparte, who was prosecuting his military successes, she was able to breathe freely, and allow her thoughts to flow in their natural channels. We have hinted that her marriage was one of *convenience* rather than affection. Her mother had made a point of her marrying a Protestant; her father, that she should not quit France; and the baron, though double her age, and not particularly suited to her in taste or talent, was good tempered, liberal, and very desirous to form the connection. They had lived peacefully, though a little coldly, together. He had engaged never to take her to Sweden without her own consent, but she had readily accompanied him when duty had called him there for a time. It is probable, therefore, that the union would have continued unbroken, had not the baron, who had always been improvidently generous, become so prodigal in his expenditure, that his affairs became deranged, and it seemed necessary for the interests of her children that Madame de Staël should separate herself from him, in order to prevent her fortune from being entirely squandered. But the separation was not of long duration. When weakened by the progress of age and disease, he seemed to require her attentions, she immediately rejoined him; and they were travelling together to Switzerland, with the intention of settling near M. Necker, when death carried him off.

It was during her separation from her husband that Madame de Staël composed her celebrated work on human progress; that splendid effort of a mind fully matured by reflection, and yet burning with youthful energy and enthusiasm. Wounded and disappointed in the present, her imagination seemed to take refuge in the glorious future, which her benevolent and ever-hopeful temperament delighted in believing to await the race of man. In this book, which she names *Literature considered in its Connection with Social Institutions*, she examines the mutual relations that exist between institutions, manners, and literature; distinctly traces the delicate threads which connect the state of society with that of philosophy and religion, and points out how invariably writers, though always influenced by the character of their nation, also react on that character itself. In the introduction, the importance of mental labour is strongly set forth; and the connection clearly indicated between literature and virtue, liberty and happiness. She eloquently proves that the greatest literary beauties have their root in the loftiest morality; that good taste springs from sound intellect; and genius from the exaltation of ardent and generous faculties. One half of the work is devoted to an examination of the past and the present; and the other, to the prospects of the future. In the first, after determining the character of every nation, in the various periods of its history, and that of its most distinguished writers, she passes rapidly in review the whole body of existing literature; and with her rare faculty of

seizing the most characteristic feature of all objects, seems able to present to us the entire spirit of the past. The second volume is filled with advice to the writers of free states, and treats of future literature, particularly that of France. The great object she had here in view, was the regulation and extension of the influence of liberty. This remarkable book is no abstract of received truths; it is a series of novel conceptions boldly seized and carefully reasoned out. She considers every subject as if she were the first person who had ever studied it, and whether we may agree with her or not, we feel that she is giving us her own, and no borrowed convictions. All her efforts are directed to one end—to shew that there is a progress; that the advance of knowledge has been real and constant, in spite of vicissitudes; that we can trace the law of the moral improvement of man through all the obscurities of time; and that the human race is tending, however slowly, towards a state of perfection.

The great subject here treated of has since been fully and ably discussed by some of the best minds of Madame de Staël's age, and that which has succeeded it; and though it is generally alleged that she pursued the fascinating idea of human perfectibility with a sanguine and assured spirit that led her sometimes into rash and questionable conclusions, it is not denied that it helped her also to many true explanations of existing phenomena, and enabled her to throw light upon much that otherwise seemed sufficiently dark and unaccountable. But her literary efforts were not confined to politics and philosophy alone at this time: her burning imagination required an outlet through fiction. From her own position, probably, her mind had long been occupied with the difficulties and suffering which beset the path of women, particularly of those who, endowed with genius and an ardent desire for happiness, are yet denied that greatest earthly felicity—wedded love. It seemed to her as impossible for such women to confine themselves within the narrow limits of their destiny, as to overstep those limits, without exposing themselves to bitter sorrows; and this idea she tried to embody in *Delphine*, a novel in letters. Of course a heroine in the position indicated, and evidently springing out of the deep heart of the author, was found sufficiently interesting, and the book was read with great avidity. Our limits prevent us from giving a sketch of the story, which is the less to be regretted, that its morality is very faulty. It is, however, full of eloquence and passion, and is enriched with many fine delineations of generosity and devotedness, which, perhaps, ought to have rescued it, even in a bad translation, from the utter contempt poured on it by Sidney Smith, in No. 3 of the *Edinburgh Review*, who begins by calling the book 'dismal trash, which has nearly dislocated the jaws of its critic with gaping over it;' and ends by saying, that 'its celebrated author would have been very guilty, if she had not been very dull!'

Bonaparte had no sooner returned from Egypt, than he began to

manifest openly the ill-will he had long felt towards Madame de Staël. He found her enjoying a great literary reputation, her house the resort of the most brilliant society of Paris, and her conversation, the ability and eloquence of which had always displeased him, eagerly sought after, and warmly appreciated even among his own generals. He was now First Consul, and his project of seizing the empire was rapidly progressing. A party of senators and generals, headed by Bernadotte, were suspected of being opposed to the usurpation; and as Madame de Staël was in the habit of frequently receiving Bernadotte and his friends, this was an additional reason for his desiring to get rid of one who was admired and popular, quite independently of him.

Next to the welfare of her father and dearest friends, Madame de Staël had always looked on the enjoyment of Parisian society as the most desirable of earthly goods. Madame de Saussure says of her, that her liking was always loving, and her love a devoted passion; and her love of Paris seems, indeed, to have been her ruling social passion. Long before this time, on an occasion when she expressed sympathy with Benjamin Constant, in a speech he proposed to make on the new dawn of tyranny, though she encouraged him to deliver it with all the strength of her convictions, she afterwards ingenuously confesses, that she could not help dreading what might happen to her in consequence. 'I was vulnerable,' she says, 'in my taste for society. Montaigne said formerly, I am a Frenchman through Paris; and if he thought so three centuries ago, what must it be now when we see so many persons of extraordinary intellect collected in one city, and so many accustomed to employ that intellect in adding to the pleasures of conversation? The demon of ennui has always pursued me: by the terror with which he inspires me, I could alone have been capable of bending the knee to tyranny, if the example of my father, and his blood which flows in my veins, had not enabled me to triumph over the weakness.' And she makes the additional confession, that had she foreseen what she was afterwards to suffer in her banishment from the dear delights of Paris, she would not have had the firmness to refuse M. Constant's offer of renouncing his project in order not to compromise her.

It was now the summer of 1802, and every step of the First Consul announced more and more clearly his design of being Emperor. Aware of her own unpopularity with him, Madame de Staël set off to pay her usual summer visit to her father at Coppet, in a state of painful anxiety and mental depression. Letters from Paris informed her that she had no sooner departed, than Bonaparte openly accused her of seeking to bias Bernadotte against him. He remarked that people always came away from her house less attached to him than when they had entered it; and the impression of her friends in Paris was, that he meant to single her out as the only culprit—afraid of the greater popularity of Bernadotte with the French army. On her arrival at Coppet, she found that her

father's work, entitled *Last Political and Financial Views*, was already in the press. M. Necker was animated by no personal resentment against Bonaparte in the publication of this book. The death of the Duc d'Enghien had not yet occurred; many people hoped for much benefit from his government; and M. Necker was disinclined to give him any cause of offence, both because he was anxious his daughter should not be banished from Paris, where she desired so exceedingly to stay, and because his own deposit of two millions was still in the hands of the government, or rather of the First Consul. But M. Necker, in his retirement, had imposed the propagation of truth as an official duty upon himself, the obligations of which no motive could induce him to neglect. He wished order and freedom, monarchy and a representative government, to be given to France; and as often as any deviation from this line occurred, he thought it his duty to employ his talent as a writer, and his knowledge as a statesman, to endeavour to bring back men's minds towards the true object. At that time, however, regarding Bonaparte as the defender of order, and the preserver of France from anarchy, he called him 'the necessary man;' and in several passages of his book, praised his abilities with expressions of esteem. But these eulogiums did not satisfy the great man. M. Necker had touched on the point which his ambition felt most acutely, by discussing the project he had formed of establishing a monarchy in France, of which he was to be the head, and of surrounding himself with a nobility of his own creation. Accordingly, as soon as the work appeared, the journalists received orders to attack it with the greatest fury; and, after its publication, no claim for the restoration of the deposit was ever admitted. The First Consul took advantage of it also to declare, in the circle of his court, that he would not permit Madame de Staël to return to Paris any more, because she had given her father such false information on the state of France. The publication of *Delphine*, just at this time, was seized on as a further pretext for abuse and vituperation of the Necker family. It was criticised by all the court journals, denounced as highly immoral, and its author severely censured. Bonaparte himself dictated a letter to be sent by the Swiss consul to M. Necker, in which he was advised to meddle no more with politics, but to leave them to the First Consul, who knew very well how to govern France with wisdom; and the Swiss consul's letter ended by saying, that Madame de Staël was to be exiled from Paris on account of the *Last Views on Politics and Finance*, published by her father.

This letter was a great blow to Madame de Staël. It was now the beginning of the winter of 1802-3; a time when Bonaparte was popular with the opposition party in England as well as with all the great noblemen of feudal Germany. Paris, besides its ordinary agreeable society, was filled with brilliant Englishmen and other illustrious foreigners, and she had naturally the strongest desire to be among them. There was no positive prohibition of

her return in M. le Brun's letter, nor had the prefect of Geneva yet received orders to refuse her a passport; and so ardent was her wish to be there, that she thought of going at once to try whether the First Consul, who at that time was still tender of public opinion, would venture to brave the murmurs her absolute banishment could not fail to excite. Her father, too, who reproached himself for being partly to blame for her unpopularity, offered to go to Paris to speak to him in her favour; and she had such an idea of his infallibility, so doting an admiration of 'the fine expression of his venerable looks,' which she imagined must captivate even Bonaparte himself, that she had almost consented to his making the journey. A little thought, however, awoke her from the illusion to which she had given herself up; she perceived how much more probable it was that the very advantages of intellect, reason, and virtue she so admired in her father, would rather weigh with the First Consul in desiring to humble their possessor; and refusing to allow him to run so obvious a risk, she settled herself, very unwillingly, at Geneva for the winter.

It appears strange that banishment from Paris should thus have been looked upon by Madame de Staël as an evil and cause of suffering almost beyond her endurance. With her great intellectual resources, her fine heart, capable of attaching itself to whatever was lovable or excellent, and the power she possessed of interesting others, and of giving the tone to whatever society she entered; one would have supposed that she, of all people, ought not to have depended for her happiness upon any clique or association, however brilliant. But though she viewed with deep interest and philosophical curiosity every form of human society, she only seems to have *loved* that to which she had been accustomed, and to have felt herself *at home* only in the midst of the bustle and excitements among which her life had begun. She was not yet fully alive to the beauties of nature. Like Charles Lamb, she preferred the 'sweet security of streets,' to the most magnificent scenery the world contained, and thought with Dr Johnson, that there was no scene equal to the high tide of human existence in the heart of a populous city. When guests who came to visit her at Geneva were in ecstasies with its lovely scenes—'Give me the Rue de Bac,' she said: 'I would rather live in Paris in the fourth story and with a hundred a year. I do not dissemble: a residence in Paris has always appeared to me under any circumstances the most desirable of all others. French conversation excels nowhere except in Paris, and conversation has been, since my infancy, my greatest pleasure.'

Believing that Bonaparte was too much occupied with his grand scheme for invading England, to have time to think any more of her offences towards him, Madame de Staël, in the autumn of 1803, ventured to go to a little country-seat she had at ten leagues from Paris. All she desired was to see a few of her most intimate friends there, and to go occasionally to the theatre and museum. But

she had not been quietly settled there a month, before an officious lady told Bonaparte that the roads were covered with people going to visit her, and she was immediately given to understand that a gendarme would be sent in a few days with an order for her departure. Her imagination readily conjured up a scene of terror too formidable to be braved without any support or companionship except that of her young children, and she took refuge with a friend in the neighbourhood. Even under her friend's protection, her agitation was but little lessened. She sat up all night listening at the window, every moment expecting to hear the tread of a mounted gendarme. Next morning, she wrote a letter to Joseph Bonaparte, describing her unhappiness, and begging for his intercession; and both Joseph and Lucien generously used all their efforts to befriend her, but without effect. Madame Récamier, the celebrated beauty, proposed to her to come and live at her country-house at St Brice, two leagues from Paris; and having no idea that one who took no part in politics could be injured by it, she willingly accepted the offer. There she found a delightful society collected, and for the last time enjoyed the full sweetness of what she so keenly relished.

Hearing nothing more of her banishment, she tried to persuade herself that Bonaparte had been induced to renounce the design, and in a few days again ventured to her country-seat. But the blow had only been suspended. We quote her own graphic account of its fall: 'I was sitting at table with three of my friends, in a room which commanded a view of the high road and entrance-gate. It was now the end of September. At four o'clock, a man in a brown coat, on horseback, stops at the gate and rings. I was then certain of my fate. He asked to see me, and I went to receive him in the garden. In walking towards him, the perfume of the flowers and the beauty of the sun particularly struck me. I felt how different are the combinations of society from those of Nature! This man informed me that he was the commandant of the gendarmerie of Versailles; but that his orders were to go out of uniform, that he might not alarm me. He shewed me a letter signed by Bonaparte, which contained the order to banish me to forty leagues' distance from Paris, with an injunction to make me depart within twenty-four hours, and at the same time to treat me with all the respect due to a lady of distinction. He pretended to treat me as a foreigner, and, as such, subject to the police. . . . I told the gendarme-officer, that to depart within twenty-four hours might be convenient to conscripts, but not to a woman and children; and I proposed to him to accompany me to Paris, where I must pass three days in making the necessary arrangements for my journey. I got into my carriage with my children and this officer, who had been selected for the occasion as the most literary of the gendarmes. In truth, he began to compliment me upon my writings. "You see," said I, "the consequences of being a woman of intellect, and I would recommend you, if there is

occasion, to dissuade any female of your family from distinguishing herself." I endeavoured to keep up my spirits by boldness, but I felt the barb in my heart.' She went to a house she had hired, but had not yet been able to inhabit, in Paris, where her friends came to see her, to condole, and to weep with her over the approaching separation. Then she examined every room, lingering longest over the pretty drawing-room, in which she had pictured so much social enjoyment—the gendarme, in the meantime, coming every morning to press her to go off, and she, like poor Mrs Bluebeard, begging for yet another day's respite. On the evening of the last day that could be granted, Joseph Bonaparte made one more vain effort in her favour; and his wife had the kindness to come and propose her to pass a few days at their country-house at Morfontaine. Although it was on the way to her exile, Madame de Staël accepted the invitation most gratefully—sensibly affected by Joseph's goodness in receiving her at his own house at the very time she was the object of his brother's persecution.

At last, it was absolutely necessary she should depart, though where to go she could not at once decide. The choice lay between Switzerland and Germany. She knew that her father would have tenderly welcomed home his poor bird ruffled by the storm; but she dreaded the ennui that would probably seize her on being sent back in this manner to a country she had, even in more favourable circumstances, found rather monotonous. She decided, therefore, on Germany: she had been promised a kind reception there; and it pleased her to think she should be able to place the politeness of ancient dynasties in full contrast with the rude impertinence of that which was preparing to subjugate France. Alas! how often and bitterly did she regret giving way to this movement of self-love! Had she then returned to Geneva, she would have once more seen her father, a pleasure she never again enjoyed on earth. He was kindly anxious that she should go to Germany, and wrote cheerfully urging it, and reminding her of the harvest of new ideas she would bring back to him in the spring. Joseph Bonaparte gave her excellent letters of introduction for Berlin, and bade her adieu in a noble and touching manner; and she set off, accompanied by Benjamin Constant, who sacrificed the pleasures of Paris that he might bear her company. At Frankfort, she had a new trial. Her daughter, afterwards the Duchess de Broglie, then only five years old, fell dangerously ill. She knew nobody in that city, nor a word of the language; and the physician who attended the child had scarcely a word of French. Her father wrote to her every day, and copied with his own hand prescriptions and consultations with physicians; and the child recovered. Arrived at Weimar, her courage rose; she soon began to see, through the difficulties of the German language, the immense intellectual riches its literature contained. She learned to read German, and listened attentively to Goethe and Wieland, who, fortunately for her, both spoke French extremely well. She

comprehended the mind and genius of Schiller, in spite of the difficulty he felt in expressing himself in a foreign language. The society of the Duke and Duchess of Weimar pleased her exceedingly, and she passed three months there, during which the study of German literature gave her mind the full occupation it required, to prevent her from being devoured by her own feelings.

But the ease and repose of mind enjoyed by Madame de Staël, among these new interests, were of short duration. She left Weimar for Berlin, where she was graciously received and kindly treated by the king and queen of Prussia, and had not been many weeks there, before the news reached her of the Duke d'Enghien's barbarous murder. At first, she refused to give credence to the report. Bad as she had thought Bonaparte, and bitterly as she disliked him, she could not believe in the possibility of his committing such an atrocity. The consternation of M. Necker at this tyrannical act seemed to lay prostrate the remaining powers of a life already much enfeebled; and the last lines to his daughter, traced by his hand, were an outpouring of grief and indignation. In a very few days after this, she found a letter on her table announcing that her father was dangerously ill. He was dead, but they feared to tell her the truth at once; and she set off instantly, animated by the most intense desire to see him once again. Though informed of his death before leaving Germany, she could take no rest without going to the place where his remains lay. Her own description of this terrible crisis of her troubled life will shew, better than any words of ours could do, the wild poetry of her nature, and the true devotion of soul with which she regarded him who had been so emphatically her 'God upon earth!'

'When the real truth became known to me at Weimar, I was seized with a mingled sensation of inexpressible terror and despair: I felt that I was now without support in the world, and must henceforth rely entirely on myself for sustaining my soul against misfortune. Many objects of attachment still remained to me; but the sentiment of affectionate admiration which I felt for my father, exercised over me a sway with which no other could come in competition. Grief, which is the truest of prophets, predicted to me that I should never more be happy at heart as I had been whilst this large-hearted man watched over my fate; and not a single day since the month of April 1804 has passed in which I have not connected all my troubles with his loss. So long as my father lived, I suffered only from imagination; for in the affairs of real life, he always found means to be of service to me. After losing him, I came in direct communication with destiny. It is, nevertheless, to the hope that he is praying for me in heaven, that I am indebted for the fortitude I retain. It is not merely the affection of a daughter, but the most intimate knowledge of his character, which makes me affirm, that I have never seen human nature carried nearer to perfection than it was in his soul. I



should become mad with the idea that such a being could have ceased to exist. There was so much of immortality in his thoughts and feelings, that a hundred times when I have experienced emotions which elevate me above myself, I have felt convinced that I was still in immediate relation with him. . . . He was a truly great man—a man who, in no circumstances of his life, ever preferred the most important of his interests to the least of his duties; a man who was so good, that he could have dispensed with principles, and whose principles were so strict, that he might have dispensed with goodness.'

On her return to Switzerland after her father's death, her first desire was to seek some alleviation of her sorrow in giving to the world a faithful portrait of him she had lost, and in collecting the last traces of his thoughts; and in the autumn of 1804 she published his manuscripts, with a sketch of his public and private character. Soon after this, she went into Italy. Her health, much impaired by grief and misfortune, seemed to require that she should breathe the air of the south; and the beautiful sky of Naples, the recollections of antiquity, and the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art opened to her sources of enjoyment to which she had hitherto been a stranger. She returned from Italy in the summer of 1805, and passed a year at Coppet and Geneva, where some of her friends, and several intelligent and interesting Englishmen, were then residing; and it was during this time that she began to write *Corinne*.

This novel, the most popular of all Madame de Staël's works, might well be called 'Italy shewn by the hand of love.' Its object was twofold: to interweave with the incidents of a fictitious narrative whatever was to be found most worthy of attention in beautiful Italy; and to compare and contrast in the hero and heroine the northern and southern temperament and character: and surely never was the union of the true with the fictitious more skilfully effected, nor the extreme of civilised Europe, Great Britain and Italy, more powerfully contrasted. The plot of this highly original tale, besides being well known, is too complicated to be sketched in the few words possible to our limits. We refer those of our readers not already familiar with it, to the work itself, as one of the most interesting and affecting fictions in existence. It is a work of real genius, at once a poem and a revelation of the heart. Nothing can be more animated, lively, and even gay, than many of its scenes and descriptions; yet a thoughtful and tender melancholy is its prevailing sentiment, and scarcely a line seems to be written without deep emotion. It is supposed that Delphine was Madame de Staël herself—*Corinne*—the Muse of Italy—improvisatrice, musician, painter, and beautiful woman, was undoubtedly her ideal—what she would have wished to have been. In painting her, she probably wished to diminish the prejudices often entertained against great talents in women; and yet, in making her misfortunes spring from her genius and

enthusiasm, the idea expressed in *Delphine* again recurs—that a woman endowed with superior faculties who cannot confine herself to the path prescribed by public opinion, will, on deviating from it, soon fall a prey to the heaviest sorrows. There is no fault to the moral of this beautiful story. If *Corinne* be too impassioned and too fond of fame to suit her position as a woman, she affectingly confesses her errors; and the unhappiness she suffers in consequence of having been led too far by these human affections, is quite great enough, we should think, to satisfy the coldest and most conventional of censors. In her last fine improvisation, her farewell to Italy, she says:

‘I had my inspiration from the skies—  
From evervarying nature, and I deemed  
That even upon earth our hearts could find  
Celestial happiness, which only seemed  
An endless aspiration of our mind  
To noble thoughts—and constancy in love.

No! I repent me not, that generous fire  
Is not the cause that I have washed with tears  
The grave that waits for me. Ah! had my lyre  
Been tuned to sing the goodness that appears  
Throughout the universe—the power Divine,  
Mine would have been a higher destiny:  
The immortal gifts of Heaven had been mine.  
And thou, my God! thou wilt not turn from me  
The glory of thy face; the homage high  
Of poesy is due to thee alone—  
Thought only brings us unto thee more nigh.

Yes, in my prime,  
Had I but fixed my never-dying love  
On him alone—ah! had I only placed  
My youthful head on high—far, far above  
Affection’s reach—mine had not been the waste  
Of ruined hopes, nor mine the phantom-light  
That took the place of my chimeras bright.

Ah me! my glowing genius is no more!  
Or only felt in the unceasing flow  
Of my deep sorrow; yet my heart would pour  
One last farewell for thee, amidst my wo,  
My own dear country! Thou hast still a spell  
Over my being: once again, farewell!’

The success of *Corinne* was prodigious. The deep reading displayed in it; the ingenious criticisms in art and literature; the delicate observation of life and manners; the poetry, passion, and profound religious feeling; all combined by true genius into a romantic, yet lifelike whole, commanded every one’s interest and applause, and there was but one voice respecting it throughout lettered Europe. Madame de Saussure informs us, that her son, who happened to be in Edinburgh at the moment when, notwithstanding the war, a few copies of *Corinne* had reached it, wrote to tell Madame de Staël’s friends at Geneva of the inconceivable noise it made ‘in that enlightened city.’ ‘The whole body of society there,’ she says, ‘was electrified: metaphysicians, geologists, professors of every kind, stopped one another on the street to inquire how far they had got in its perusal. The picture of

English manners was judged perfectly faithful; and it was said, that some little country town, the name of which Madame de Staël had never heard in her life, was grievously offended, because it was supposed she had intended to turn it into ridicule.

Though there was nothing political in *Corinne*, the new literary popularity of its author highly exasperated Bonaparte against her. He was now Emperor, and intoxicated with power, he had no scruple in letting her know that her sentence of banishment was now stringently renewed. There was nothing, therefore, for Madame de Staël but to resign herself to it; and in 1807 she returned to Vienna, in order to collect materials for the great work she had long projected—a picture of Germany in regard to morals, literature, and philosophy.

It is impossible for us to give our readers any adequate idea of this stupendous effort of Madame de Staël's genius—the fruit of six years of patient examination, of careful and vigorous thinking. It is the most ambitious of all her works, and perhaps the most instructive. Those who are best acquainted with the vast intellectual development of Germany during the last seventy or eighty years, are alone able to appreciate its extraordinary merit. With the new language and society, a mode of seeing, feeling, and existing, entirely different from anything she had previously apprehended, seemed to be vividly revealed to her; and the number of new ideas she found in circulation among enlightened German thinkers, were eagerly seized on by her, and explained and illustrated with a beauty and originality of expression which gave them additional significance, even to those who had first given them birth. It was like the purple and perfume which a deep and rich soil lends to the simple wayside violet. ‘My daughter wants an initial word,’ said M. Necker; and perhaps it was true; but this word was found by her everywhere and on all subjects, and her variations upon it generally contained finer harmonies and a grander and more significant music than the original theme. Sir James Mackintosh says of this work, that it is ‘probably the most elaborate and masculine production of the faculties of woman;’ and asks, ‘what woman, indeed, or, we may add, how many men, could have preserved all the grace and brilliancy of Parisian society in analysing its nature—explained the most abstruse and metaphysical theories of Germany precisely, yet perspicuously and agreeably—and combined the eloquence which inspires exalted sentiments of virtue, with the enviable talent of gently indicating the defects of men or of nations, by the skilfully softened touches of a polite and merciful pleasantry?’

The fate of this work is well known. After it had gone through a rigid examination by censors, been passed by them, and 2000 copies of it printed, it was suppressed. On reading it, Bonaparte found its general spirit too inimical to despotic power, and gave orders that the whole impression should instantly be seized and burned, and its author banished entirely from France. One

passage in the minister of police's letter to Madame de Staël on the occasion, is too amusing not to be quoted. It throws light on the true reason of Bonaparte's rancour against her:—'You are not to seek for the cause of the order I have signified to you in the *silence* which you have observed with regard to the Emperor in your last work; *that would be a great mistake*. He could find no place there which was worthy of him. Your exile is a natural consequence of the line of conduct constantly pursued by you for several years past. It has appeared to me that *the air of this country did not at all agree with you*. We are not yet reduced to seek for models in the nations you admire.'

Those alone who are disposed to make light of all such persecutions as come short of chains and torture, will refuse their sympathy with Madame de Staël in what she suffered on this new act of tyranny. It was soon followed, however, by others which caused her far more poignant anguish than any merely personal suffering or contempt could have done. Persecution of herself was not enough—she must be wounded also in the objects of her affection. One after another of those who were dearest to her, were torn from her, and exiled from their country. M. Schlegel, one of the most distinguished literati of Germany, who had been her faithful friend, and the tutor of her two sons for eight years, was ordered to quit Geneva and Coppet; the excuse for which was, that some of his literary opinions were objectionable—in particular, that in a comparison he had lately made between the *Phædra* of Euripides and that of Racine, he had given the preference to the former! But the real cause was, that he was Madame de Staël's friend, and that his society and conversation animated her solitude. Next, her life-long friend, M. de Montmorenci, and the beautiful Madame Récamier, were both condemned to perpetual exile because they had gone to Coppet for only a few days to try to console her.

Our strict limits forbid us to do more than thus merely allude to the suffering of Madame de Staël during these years of Napoleon's great power, by far the most poignant part of which was in witnessing the contagion of unhappiness she diffused all around her. They oblige us, also, to pass entirely over many very interesting passages of her life—her escape into Russia, her gracious reception in that country, and her many interesting observations on its scenery, manners, and institutions; her stay in Sweden, and the publication there of her work on Suicide; her visit to England, where she was received with all the attention and respect due to her genius and political importance; and, finally, her return to France after the restoration of Louis XVIII., with the writing of her great works on the French Revolution, and *Ten Years of Exile*; which last was cut short by her death in 1817, at the age of fifty-one.

One important event of her life, however, must not be so quickly dismissed. It is that of her second marriage, in 1811, to M. Rocca, a handsome young French officer. It will be no subject of

wonder that this union was, at the time, widely censured; and if we are to think only of Madame de Staël as rich, highly distinguished, and forty-five years of age, while her bridegroom was poor, handsome, and scarcely thirty, it seems difficult to banish the idea of its having originated on her side—in a weak, foolish, *engouement* for his youth and good looks, with perhaps a still more discreditable motive on his. Madame de N. Saussure assures us, however, that this is far from being the true view of the case; that a romantic attachment had long been entertained by M. Rocca for her, before the idea had entered into her mind of loving him; and her account of the whole affair is so interesting, and at the same time so candid, that we cannot refrain from quoting it entire.

‘A young man, of good family, inspired a great deal of interest at Geneva by what was said of his eminent courage, and by the contrast between his age and his tottering walk, his paleness, and the state of weakness to which he was reduced. Some wounds received in Spain, the effects of which ultimately proved mortal, had brought him to the gates of death, and he remained ill and suffering. A compassionate word or two addressed to the unfortunate man by Madame de Staël had a prodigious effect on him. There was something celestial in her tone of voice. Madame de Tessé once said: “If I were a queen, I would have Madame de Staël to talk to me always.” This ravishing music renewed the existence of the young man; his head and heart were fired; he set no bounds to his wishes, and immediately formed the greatest projects. “I will love her so,” he said to one of his friends at an early period, “that she will at length marry me”—a singular expression, which might have been inspired by various motives, but to which the most uninterrupted devotedness and enthusiasm oblige us to give a favourable interpretation.

‘These high pretensions were seconded by circumstances. Madame de Staël was extremely unhappy, and weary of being so. Her highly elastic mind had a tendency to rise again, and required but one hope. Thus, at the moment when the bonds of her captivity were drawing more and more close, and gloomy clouds from all quarters were gathering over her head, a new day came to break upon her, and the dream of her whole life, matrimonial love, seemed capable of being realised for her. What such a union was in her eyes, is well known. That pleasantry of hers which has been quoted—“I will oblige my daughter to marry for love”—expressed a serious opinion. The idea of forming such a tie herself, had never during the ten years of her widowhood been altogether a stranger to her mind. In speaking of the asylum which she hoped one day to find in England, she has sometimes said: “I feel a want of tenderness, of happiness, and of support; and if I find there a noble character, I am willing to make a sacrifice of my liberty.” This noble character was found on a sudden close by her. No doubt, she might have made a more

suitable choice; but the inconvenience of love-matches is—that they do not originate from choice.

‘It is certain, however, that this union rendered her happy. She had formed a just opinion of the noble mind of M. Rocca; she found in him extreme tenderness, constant admiration, chivalrous sentiments, and, what always pleased Madame de Staël, language naturally poetic, imagination, even talents—as some of his writings shew—graceful pleasantry, a sort of irregular and unexpected wit, which stimulated hers, and gave her life the zest of variety. To these were added a profound pity on her part for the sufferings he endured, and apprehensions continually reviving that kept alive her emotions and enchained her thoughts.

‘She would have done better, no doubt, had she avowed this marriage; but a degree of timidity, from which the sort of courage she possessed did not emancipate her, and her attachment to the name she had rendered illustrious, having restrained her, her ideas were wholly employed in parrying the difficulties of her situation. Must we say that it would have been better for her not to have placed herself in that situation? Must we say that Madame de Staël is not to be set up as an example in every point? To this, she herself would willingly have assented; this she has said to her children, and this she has insinuated in her writings, as much as a proud mind conscious of its own greatness would permit.’

Had our space permitted it, we should like to have given a series of passages selected from Madame de Staël’s various works, as illustrative of the vigour and eloquence with which she expresses herself on every subject she handles. A few sentences must, however, suffice, and we quote first her amusing French version of the golden rule of ‘doing as you would be done by :’—

‘The French always talk lightly of their misfortunes for fear of boring their friends. They easily divine the weariness they may excite by what they are capable of feeling, and they gracefully take the *pas* in seeming careless about their own fate, that they may not be shewn the example. The desire of appearing agreeable suggests a gay expression of countenance, whatever the inward disposition of the soul may be; the physiognomy by degrees influences the feelings; and the effort made to please others, soon excites in one’s self something of the pleasure. A witty lady has said that Paris is, of all the world, the place where one can best dispense with being happy. It is in this view that it suits the poor human race so well.

CONVERSATION EMPHATICALLY AN ART.—‘To succeed in conversation, we must possess the tact of perceiving clearly and at every instant the impression made on those with whom we converse; that which they would fain conceal, as well as that which they would willingly exaggerate—the inward satisfaction of some, the forced smile of others. We must be able to note and to arrest half-formed censures as they pass over the countenances of the listeners, by hastening to dissipate them before self-love

be engaged against us. There is no arena in which vanity displays itself under such a variety of forms as in conversation.'—*L'Allemagne.*

THE FALSE POSITION OF DISTINGUISHED WOMEN.—'The aspect of ill-will makes women tremble, however distinguished they may be. Courageous in misfortune, they are timid against enmity. Thought exalts them, yet their character remains feeble and timid. Most of the women in whom the possession of high faculties has awakened the desire of fame, are like Erminia in her warlike accoutrements. The warriors see the casque, the lance, the shining plume; they expect to meet force, they attack with violence, and with the first stroke reach the heart.'—*Sur la Littérature.*

We despair of ever seeing a perfectly satisfactory analysis of the character of Madame de Staël. To portray to the life her gigantic lineaments; to fathom to their full depth those wonderful faculties, in their infinitely varied combinations, would seem to require the pencil or plummet-line of a genius as brilliant and comprehensive as her own. We need scarcely say, we make no pretensions to so difficult a task. We claim indulgence for venturing even to offer a few simple and obvious traits of her; and we do so, in all humility, and with the perfect conviction of their feebleness and inadequacy.

Madame de Staël's life was a phenomenon. Never before were genius and the woman, strength and weakness, energy and sensibility, so closely united as they were in her. With the most masculine of intellects, she never forgot she was a woman—nor, in her most vehement desire for fame and glory, for a moment supposed that happiness could be found out of the sphere of the affections. Her greatness and her unhappiness seemed to spring from the same source—a constant movement of the soul and heart, which, while it elevated her far above those around her, yet demanded from them sympathy and love as its necessary food. An overstimulated youth acting on a temperament naturally ardent and impassioned, had probably aggravated these tendencies to a morbid extent; for in the very prime of her life, and strength of her intellect, it would have seemed to her almost as impossible to dispense with the luxury of deep and strong emotions, as with the air which sustained her existence. And if this necessity of her nature often assisted her in acting greatly in great emergencies—in resisting tyranny, or in making sacrifices to noble opinions; it was no less powerful in suggesting that dread of ennui, that terror for the stagnation of existence which haunted her happiest moments, and made her exile seem doubly dreadful. Many of Madame de Staël's tastes were tinged by this necessity of excitement. She could better endure great defects of character in people, than merely negative virtues—*brusquerie* than apathy, oddity than mediocrity. Like Goethe, she had rather that people had the vigour to commit some absurdity, than be always finically

correct and shallowly wise. Indifference even of manner displeased and wearied her. 'How can he expect me to attend to him,' she would say, 'when he does not take the trouble to attend to himself;' and she said one day of an egotist and caviller: 'That man talks only of himself; but he does not tire me, because I am certain that at least he feels interested in his subject.'

Though Madame de Staël's devotion to her father may be said to have been somewhat inordinate, her affection for her children was always restrained within the bounds of reason and discretion. She was a tender and affectionate mother, without being either blind to their faults or injuriously indulgent to them. 'Passionate effusions,' she truly said, 'are not valued by children; kindness and equity suit them better.' With her usual clear-sightedness, she disapproved of that oversolicitous care and devotion of parents to children which is one of the crying evils of the present system of upbringing, and pointed out the danger 'that little creatures who see everything giving way to their convenience, will be apt to become vain and selfish in consequence.' Without going to the other extreme, and treating them 'to a little wholesome neglect,' she kept her eye on their individual peculiarities of temper and disposition, treated them without artifice or deception, exercised a moderate authority over them, and expressed her will with a mild decision. Literary fame was not the first object of Madame de Staël's life. Her writings had generally a definite purpose of usefulness and instruction for others; but she often both wrote and spoke simply out of that abundance of ideas that were constantly pressing upon her, and which so readily found graceful and eloquent expression. Whatever subject presented itself, she seized it, rapidly examined it from every point of view, and set it forth on the stage with equal liveliness and perspicuity.

Though educated in the strict principles of Calvinism, she was at no period of her life either sectarian or bigot. The simple form of worship in the exercise of which she had joined with her parents, was always sacred to her imagination; and had there been no better reason for her adherence to it than its being associated with them, this would have been sufficient to prevent her from being led away by the more splendid surroundings and lofty pretensions of popery. In theology, as in everything else, she was persuasive rather than dogmatic. Through every year of her life, she became more and more convinced of the sublime truths of Christianity, as well as of its perfect suitableness to the nature of man; but she contented herself by testifying in favour of the religion she professed, rather than in reasoning systematically upon it. As Madame de Saussure finely remarks: 'Such a genius as hers, and so directed, is the only missionary who could possibly succeed in doing permanent good to a world like the present—to the vain, the learned, the argumentative, and the scornful, who stone the prophets, while they affect to offer incense to the Muses.'

In correctly estimating Madame de Staël's intellectual attain-



MADAME DE STAEL HOLSTEIN.

ments, we must look less at the completeness and perfection of any single achievement, than at the extraordinary variety and difficulty of the subjects on which she has discoursed. Many even among her own sex may be said to rank higher than she does in some one particular line—in finishing to the last fine touch an individual portrait, scene, or phase of life and manners—in delicately pointing a moral or in illustrating a useful and important truth. But how few *men* are there who, like her, have ranged fearlessly over the whole field of human inquiry—literature, politics, morals, religion, and philosophy—have seized on, and patiently traced out, the fine and almost imperceptible filaments which interweave and bind all these firmly together—have discussed with candour the most subtle questions connected with each, and been able with the unerring tact of genius, to throw some rays of new light upon them all!





## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**T**HE opinion that poetry has ceased to occupy the prominent place in the modern literature of Great Britain, which was obtained for it by the writers of the age immediately preceding our own, has now become very general. It is even supposed by some—erroneously, as we conceive—that the tendencies of our time are inimical to the free outgoings of imagination, and that henceforth the poetic must give place to the strictly practical in the operations of the intellect. It would be difficult to imagine any period in the history of a people in which the mission of the poet was no longer to be recognised, or in which the materials of poetry could no longer be found. So long as the mind of man is constituted as it has been since the beginning of the world, so long as it has faculties that tend to poetry, and are incomplete in their development without it in one form or another, such an objection as the one we have stated can

scarcely be considered worthy of being refuted. It must be admitted, that in the age in which we live, no poet has risen to the altitude attained by some of his predecessors. This is perhaps the necessary consequence of that eminence having been previously attained. The taste, the faculty by which poetry is estimated as well as felt, has been thereby elevated; and much higher efforts are now necessary to reach the standard which that taste has set up, than were required fifty years ago. That the present, like all preceding ages, is a poetical one, will be best shewn by a reference to what it has produced; and it is therefore our object, in a brief and general review of the works of living British poets, to shew that they possess all the elements which are necessary for the cultivation of that sense of the beautiful in which consists our love of poetry. With that end in view, we need not stay to add another to the many attempts which have been made to define what poetry is. We cannot always explain, even to ourselves, the things we feel; and in connection with a subject which appeals so slightly to the reasoning faculty, and which admits of such full and forcible illustration, we deem it best to proceed upon the inference, that our readers can easily appreciate that combination of imagination and passion which constitutes a true poem. It is necessary, however, to state at the outset, that our observations and illustrations must be confined to the poets of the present generation. A survey, which would embrace the poetical literature of the last half century, or even the last thirty years, would include works which are now familiar to almost every reader; and our object is chiefly to deal with such as are comparatively little known. We cannot even extend our remarks to all the living poets, inasmuch as some of those who were the contemporaries of Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Southey, and the writers of the last generation, still survive, and claim, in some measure, to be classed with those of the present. Strictly speaking, however, they exist only in their personality, and, as poets, must be ranked with those of the past. It will be more in accordance with our purpose, then, to limit our application of the subject before us to those who may be regarded as the rising poets of the days in which we live, or who have yet to attain to that popularity which belongs to the works of some of their immediate predecessors. If we include in this class a poet so well known as ALFRED TENNYSON, it must be to place him at the head of it. A writer not only of acknowledged genius, but of acknowledged power, Tennyson may be said to represent the highest poetical tendencies of the age. Varied as is his style, from a marked simplicity equal to that of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*, to a mystical romance, akin to the more obscure passages of Shelley, or the wilder ones of Coleridge, a unity of spirit pervades all his writings. His excellence is many-sided; his poetry is that of a largely receptive mind, not less than that of a deep and expansive sympathy. Subjective in the highest degree, it depends for its interest on a certain approximation on the part of

## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

the reader to the poet's condition of soul, more than that of any of his contemporaries. Hence it is probable that many of his lyrics will have not only a higher significance to some minds than to others, but will afford that gratification which a direct appeal to our own consciousness almost always yields. On the other hand, there are beauties in them which depend on no such peculiarities for their effect, but are beauties, from their possessing all the charms which elevated feeling, luxurious imagery, and exquisite music, combine to give them. *The Day Dream*, *The Palace of Art*, *Locksley Hall*, *The Talking Oak*, and *The Dream of Fair Women*, contain many of these; in proof of which, we shall extract a few verses from the last-mentioned poem, a work abounding in rich and subtle fancies:—

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song  
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars;  
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,  
And trumpets blown for wars.

\* \* \* \*

At length I saw a lady within call,  
Still than chiseled marble, standing there—  
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness, with shame and with surprise  
Froze my swift speech; she turning on my face  
The starlike sorrows of immortal eyes,  
Spoke slowly in her place:

'I had great beauty—ask thou not my name;  
No one can be more wise than destiny.  
Many drew swords, and died. Where'er I came  
I brought calamity.'

Wandering onward from this, the beauteous author of the siege of Troy, the poet encounters, each by each, the renowned women of the ancient world: Cleopatra—

A queen with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,  
Brow bound with burning gold;

and Rosamond with her 'low voice full of care;' Iphigenia by his side 'to her full height her stately stature draws;' and crossing his visionary path came

Her who knew that Love can vanquish Death,  
Who kneeling, with one arm around her king,  
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,  
Sweet as new buds in spring;

and singing

Clearer than the crested bird  
That claps his wings at dawn,

comes the daughter of the warrior Gileadite. She sings :

‘It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father’s will ;  
Because the kiss he gave me ere I fell  
Sweetens the spirit still.

‘Moreover, it is written that my race  
Hewed Ammon hip and thigh from Aroer  
On Arnon unto Minnith.’ Here her face  
Glowed as I looked at her.

She locked her lips ; she left me where I stood,  
‘Glory to God,’ she sang, and passed afar,  
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood  
Toward the morning-star.

The music of Tennyson’s verse may almost be said to suffice, in some cases, for our sense of the beautiful. It steals across the spirit like the first faint tones of the Æolian lyre, leaving its cadence only. Thus, in the three irregular, but most musical verses, entitled *Claribel*, the chief charm is that which melody exercises, or, rather, which proceeds from the exquisite adaptation of language to the tone :—

Where Claribel low lieth,  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall ;  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony  
Where Claribel low lieth.

And again in *The May Queen*—a poem of touching tenderness, one of the poet’s most truthful and complete productions—we have the same exquisite sense of music, though the cadence is of a livelier character :—

You must wake and call me early—call me early, mother dear ;  
To-morrow ’ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year—  
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest, the merriest day,  
For I’m to be Queen of the May, mother—I’m to be Queen of the  
May.

The reader of the poet’s works will find this same melodious and deep-toned music, though of a wilder measure, in the powerful ballad of *Oriana*, and, indeed, in almost all his finer lyrics. We turn, however, to notice another characteristic of his genius—namely, his power of elaborate, and yet exquisitely light and graceful description. Akin to the inventory which Shakspeare makes of the chamber of Lucrece, or to that most artistic of all

the poems of John Keats, *The Eve of St Agnes*, is Tennyson's picture of the Sleeping Beauty, in his poem entitled *The Day Dream*—a poem founded on the old Eastern tale of the enchanted palace, the inmates of which could only be disenthralled by the advent of the adventurous lover who should wake the princess from her charmed sleep with a kiss. Here is the picture of the lady in her enchanted slumber :—

Year after year unto her feet,  
She lying on her couch alone,  
Across the purple coverlet  
The maiden's jet black hair has grown,  
On either side her tranced form  
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl ;  
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,  
And moves not on the rounded curl.

The silk star-broidered coverlid  
Unto her limbs itself doth mould  
Languidly ever ; and amid  
Her full black ringlets downward rolled,  
Gloweth forth each softly rounded arm  
With bracelets of the diamond bright ;  
Her constant beauty doth inform  
Stillness with love and day with light.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard  
In palace chambers far apart ;  
The fragrant tresses are not stirred  
That lie upon her charmed heart.  
She sleeps : on either side upswells  
The gold fringed pillow lightly prest ;  
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells  
A perfect form in perfect rest.

These lines are unsurpassed for their fancifully graphic power by anything which Tennyson has written. In his *Morte d'Arthur*—a far higher effort of the imagination—there are passages of still and lonely grandeur, which contain pictures of a broader outline ; in *Dora*—a simple and beautiful poem—there are more homely ones ; and from *The Princess*, many pages might be quoted illustrative of the same graces of fancy ; but in none of these do we find a greater luxuriousness and warmth. Tennyson's descriptive writing differs from what is usually styled descriptive poetry, in the success with which general features are brought out, rather than in minute accuracy of detail. His pictures are fresh and sunny as those of a Ruysdaal ; or they contain, in a few vivid images, a completeness which fills the imagination with the landscape, and displays it to the mind's eye in all its suggestive beauty. We may illustrate this by two extracts—the one affording a fine glimpse of rural

peacefulness, and the other a wild Salvator Rosa-like picture, given in a few bold broad strokes. The first is from *The Gardener's Daughter* :—

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite  
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.  
News from the humming city comes to it  
In sound of funeral or marriage bells ;  
And sitting, muffled in dark leaves, you hear  
The windy clanging of the minster-clock ;  
Although between it and the garden lies  
A league of grass, washed by a slow broad stream,  
That, stirred with languid pulses of the oar,  
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on  
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge  
Crowned with the minster towers.

The fields between  
Are dewy fresh, browsed by deep-uddered kine ;  
And all about the large lime feathers low  
The lime a summer-home of murmurous wings.  
\* \* \* From the woods  
Came voices of the well-contented doves.  
The lark could scarce get out his notes for joy,  
But shook his song together as he neared  
His happy home, the ground. To left and right  
The cuckoo told his name to all the hills.

The other is from *In Memoriam*, and is an effort of greater power :—

To-night the winds began to rise,  
And roar from yonder dropping day ;  
The last red leaf is whirled away,  
The rooks are blown about the skies.

The forest cracked, the waters curled,  
The cattle huddled on the lea ;  
And, wildly dashed on tower and tree,  
The sunbeam strikes along the world.

The series of elegiac poems from which the above lines are taken, were obviously written at intervals during a period extending over several years. They were immediately suggested by the early death of the son of Mr Hallam, the historian, a dear friend of the poet ; but their scope and interest are as wide and varied as the thoughts and feelings arising from the writer's contemplation of the great elementary truths of life. Taken as a whole, and considered in relation to the process of mental discipline unfolded, or the progressive stages of feeling through which it brings us, *In Memoriam* is Tennyson's greatest work. More sustained and congruous than *The Princess*—a poem which he gave to the world a few years previous—it displays far higher artistic power, and

## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

contains deeper and more profound truths, while the feeling throughout is dignified, though strongly expressed. In its strict elegiac character, there is perhaps a little too much of that which appeals to the intellect rather than the feelings; but the effects of sorrow, from doubt, and gloom, and despair, up to hope and peace, and the assurance of immortality, are illustrated by beautiful imagery and touches of the purest tenderness. There are few finer things in modern poetry than this calm and pathetic suggestion of death—the death of him whom the poet mourns in the harmony of sorrow:—

The path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,  
Through four sweet years arose and fell  
From flower to flower, from snow to snow;

And we with singing cheered the way,  
And crowned with all the season lent,  
From April on to April went,  
And glad of heart, from May to May.

But where the path we walked began  
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
As we descended following Hope,  
There sat the Shadow feared of man—

Who broke our fair companionship,  
And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
And wrapped thee formless in the fold,  
And dulled the murmur on thy lip—

And bore thee where I could not see  
Nor follow, though I walk in haste,  
And think that somewhere in the waste  
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

From this contemplation of his loss, the poet rises into a higher region of emotion, and even makes his sorrow minister to his faith:—

I envy not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods.

I hold it true whate'er befall—  
I feel it when I sorrow most—  
'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all.

It will be seen, we think, from the brief extracts we have given, that the poetry of Alfred Tennyson is eminently of a subjective



kind—it belongs to the highest class of subjective writing, and is as remarkable in many cases for what it suggests as for what it expresses. It is the product of a fine genius, not such, so far as we can judge, as is fitted to give to the world works of sustained greatness, but certainly capable of leaving to it a rich legacy of high poetic thought in a form more artistic than that to which any modern writer has attained.

Far removed from Tennyson in almost all the characteristics of his mind, stands PHILIP JAMES BAILEY, the author of *Festus* and *The Angel World*, with whom poetry is a possessing passion rather than a gift—a frenzy, now lifting the subject of it to heights of sublime contemplation, and inspiring him with impulses ‘such as dodge conception to the very bourne of thought,’ and now dragging him down to the ridiculous, the inconsistent, and the unintelligible. As the work of a young man, *Festus* must certainly be considered one of the most remarkable productions in modern poetry. Apart altogether from its metaphysical crudeness, its wild, irregular, and often altogether absurd speculations, its lack of artistic consistency and arrangement—all the natural products of inexperienced, half-formed opinions, and an imperfect self-consciousness—there are passages in it indicative of an imaginative power rarely surpassed, an extraordinary wealth of fancy, and a daring, reckless pursuit of poetic conceptions, which render it quite unique in modern literature. ‘The main current of the story, so to speak, has evidently been suggested by Goethe’s *Faust* ; but episodic streams branch off from it again and again, bewildering the reader, who endeavours to obtain some distinct idea of a plot, and compelling him in many cases to resign himself to the impetuous whirl of the poet’s thick-coming fancies, and to dash onward with him, now through a profusion of the richest and rarest flowers of poetic diction, and now over a perfect wilderness of metrical irregularities and disjointed thoughts. Nothing but the broad and unmistakable marks of high genius in detached passages, could ever, we think, reconcile a reader of taste to this wild poem. And yet there is a fascination in its wildness—the fascination of power triumphing over the impression which its own errors make—that cannot but exercise an influence on the imagination strong enough to give it an absorbing interest. This is not the result of success in characterisation, and certainly it does not arise from an artistic unity either of spirit or design ; it is the effect of the charm exercised by the materials of the poem, if we may so speak. These are of the most extraordinary kind. In one page we find commonplace distorted into the most grotesque forms, and blown out to all the fulness of bathos ; in the next, we find such things as the following :—

Poets are all who love—who feel great truths,  
And tell them ; and the truth of truths is love.  
Sons of the sons of God, who in olden days

Did leave their passionless heaven, for earth and woman,  
 And like a rainbow clasping the sweet earth,  
 And melting in the covenant of love,  
 Left here a bright precipitate of soul  
 Which lives for ever through the lives of men ;  
 Who make their very follies like their souls,  
 And like the young moon with a ragged edge,  
 Still in their imperfection beautiful.  
 Men whom we build our love round like an arch  
 Of triumph, as they pass us on their way  
 To glory and to immortality.  
 Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion  
 Through every limb and the whole heart, whose words  
 Haunt us as eagles haunt the mountain air.  
 Men who walk up to Fame as to a friend.

It is impossible not to recognise in this the fire and force of genius ; and the poem abounds with such lines. There are others of daring strength which approach the very verge of the profane. Such passages as the following manifest the wild power which marks so many pages of *Festus*, redeeming the crude and abortive conceptions with which they are mingled :—

Oh ! I have dreamed a dream so beautiful !  
 Methought I lay as it were here ; and, lo !  
 A spirit came and gave me wings of light,  
 Which thrice I waved delighted. Up we flew  
 Past those bright, diademed orbs which shew to men  
 Their crowns to come—up through the starry strings  
 Of that high harp close by the feet of God.  
 The wild world halted—shook his burning mane,  
 Then like a fresh-blown trumpet-blast went on—  
 Past even the last long starless void to God.

In shorter passages, even in single lines, there are gems struck out as if by one stroke of the poet's genius, each of rare lustre ; thus—

The last high upward slant of sun on the trees,  
 Like a dead soldier's sword upon his pall.

Friendship hath passed me like a ship at sea.

At each glance of her sweet eyes, a soul  
 Looked forth as from the azure gates of heaven.

The startled shrink, the faintest blossom blush  
 Of constancy alarmed.

Between the two extremes  
 Of earth and heaven there lies a mediate state,  
 A pause between the lightning lapse of life  
 And following thunders of eternity.

In each of these brief extracts the imagery is of the highest and  
 No. 72. 9

rarest kind—striking in its originality, and pure as it is striking. The pages of *Festus* are strewn with such gems of poetry as these, often beautifying long wastes of transcendental absurdity.

In his second poem, *The Angel World*, Bailey has scarcely realised the expectations founded upon the undoubted power which marks so many pages of the first. The beauties and defects are mingled in the same almost inextricable confusion; but there are fewer of both. The poem is of an allegorical character, and there are many fine conceptions in it; the imagination is more disciplined, and the sentiments generally less *outré*; a certain artistic plan seems to pervade it too; but as a whole, it does not give the impression of power which we obtain from *Festus*, with all its errors and irregularities. It abounds with passages of singular excellence, however; and in single lines we frequently have an image of more than ordinary beauty. Thus he describes the angels about to set out on a mission of love and divine beneficence—

Uprising then  
As 'twere a constellation, suddenly  
Seven of those gracious angels pressed around,  
Eager for friendly escort.

They leave 'the halls of heaven,' and, crossing the stream of life,  
'rear on its further shore a tower of light.'

Placed the foundation-stone, now one by one  
Masses of dazzling adamant which starred  
The shining shore, like flowers that fringe the banks  
Of woodland brook, they pile up altarwise.  
A sheaf of lightning on the head they place,  
Which with the skies innate communion held  
And burned in correspondence. Thus was all  
With the pure blessing of perfection crowned.

In lines of strength and beauty, *The Angel World* is scarcely less abundant than *Festus*. Let the following suffice as specimens of the originality which pervades them:—

The jubilant song swelled circling through the courts  
Of everlasting joy like a round wave.

\* \* \* \* \*  
And Wisdom passed among them like a thought  
Among a gladsome circle.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Morn, like a maiden gazing on her pearls,  
Streamed o'er the early dew.

The poem from which we take these fine lines is less known than it ought to be. Had *Festus* not preceded it, there cannot be a doubt that its excellences would have been more generally appreciated. That its author is destined to take a high place in English literature, when he has become fully conscious of his mistakes

and his strength, we do not doubt; and we cannot but believe that ere long he will be enabled to surmount the obstacles which injudicious criticism has placed in his path, and accomplish something worthy of the genius which took its first flight so boldly.

Mr ROBERT BROWNING is another poet who has scarcely yet fulfilled his early promise. *Paracelsus*, his first work, evinced a maturity of mind such as is seldom manifested by a young writer, and proclaimed him a deep and sound thinker, not less than a poet, with a wide range of imagination. In some of the things he has since published, obscurities and conceits have frequently marred the effect of the beauties with which they are combined. At the present stage of his progress, he claims attention mainly as a dramatic writer. He seems almost unconsciously to cast everything he writes into the dramatic mould; he seldom attempts the descriptive, or if so, it is in the person of one of his characters. Three of his compositions—namely, *Colombe's Birthday*, *The Blot on the Scutcheon*, and *The Return of the Druses*—have much of the ordinary features of the regular drama; but his others—*Paracelsus*, *Pippa Passes*, *A Soul's Tragedy*, and *King Victor and King Charles*—may be regarded as simply embodiments of his abstract conceptions of human nature in creatures of his own imagination. All of them abound with peculiarities: it will be seen that even the titles of some of them are peculiar; but the chief feature of Mr Browning's genius, is the striking combination of the imaginative with the reasoning faculty in his productions. Each of them has a moral purpose more or less clearly defined throughout. Thus *Paracelsus* may be called a study of a highly gifted mind in its temptations, its struggles, its self-imposed misery, and its ultimate attainment of rest in goodness. The scope of the poem is to shew that neither knowledge nor love is sufficient of itself for the work of this world, and that he who aspires to know, must also learn to love. *The Soul's Tragedy*, again, has for its aim the illustration of the false generosity which springs from vanity, as distinguished from that which has its source in true benevolence; while *Pippa Passes*, a work replete with pathos as well as power, shews us conscious innocence passing untainted through the mazes of sin and folly. Among the shorter poems, which Mr Browning very properly calls *Dramatic Lyrics*, a humorous piece, entitled *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, and a more elaborate one on the madness of Saul, are chiefly noticeable. *How they carried the News from Ghent to Aix*, and one or two pieces called *Cavalier Times*, are admirable specimens of free, bold, dashing ballad melody. We give two verses from one of the latter, merely as an illustration of Mr Browning's felicity in versification:—

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his king,  
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing;  
And pressing a troop, unable to stoop,  
And see the rogues flourish while honest folks droop,

## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Marched them along, fifty score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song :  
' God for King Charles ! Pym and such carles  
To the devil that prompts 'em such treasonous parles.  
' Cavaliers, up ! Lips from the cup !  
Hands from the pasty ! nor bite take, nor sup,  
Till you 're marching along fifty score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.'

Mr Browning's latest poem, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, is altogether a singular production, and we shall not attempt to give any idea of it. There are many parts of it very obscure; and, as a whole, it is perhaps the least favourable illustration of his predilection for employing poetical expression as the medium of conveying abstract speculation. Poetry is, as it were, forcibly associated with metaphysical analysis, and obscurity is the result. Mr Browning will require to get rid of the tendency to indulge in this ere he can ever hope to become popular. To cultivated minds, his works present many rare excellences. Amid a good deal that is crude in his philosophy, and fantastic in poetical construction, there are vivid imaginative pictures, pure and deep streams of feeling, a playfulness of fancy, and, above all, an integrity of purpose in his writings, quite sufficient to give them vitality.

Foremost among those who have earned a literary reputation of some eminence by a refined taste, and what may be termed the graces of poetry, rather than by power or marked individuality, RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES claims some attention, and deserves to be better known than he is. Were it consistent with the design of this paper, or possible within the limits assigned to it, to trace the influence of Wordsworth's genius in the writings of the living poets, we know of none whom we could more readily select as an illustration of the effects which that influence has produced than Mr Milnes, whose poetry, as a whole, might have been classed by the author of *The Excursion* under the head of 'sentiment and reflection.' Repose and intellectual calm characterise it; and nothing could be further removed from it than the enchanted reverie of Tennyson on the one hand, and the passionate rhapsody of Bailey on the other. The almost total lack of constructive power or dramatic force in Mr Milnes's *Palm Leaves* and *Poems of Many Years*, separates them to some extent from the works of his contemporaries. But while the warmth of poetic genius is wanting, its expansive sympathy and keen sensibilities are sufficiently apparent. Hence his themes have almost all a directly reflective character, or are of a kind to affect the ordinary range of feeling.

The Rev. Mr KEBLE, and RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, professor in the university of London, may be said to occupy a position on a level with that of Mr Monckton Milnes. Keble's poetry is

chiefly of a religious character, and is not likely ever to be popular. Professor Trench is a writer of much more originality. Though to some extent a mannerist, his excellences are very marked. Profound and intellectual as much of his poetry is, there is still a simplicity and an earnestness about it which never fails to satisfy, though it may not excite. *The Banished Kings*, and *Poems from Eastern Sources*, particularly the latter, contain many fine thoughts expressed in purity of language; and, indeed, almost all that he has written is characterised by a refined and elevated taste. Professor Trench may be said, however, to write for the few who can appreciate the intellectual element of poetry, rather than for ordinary minds and common sympathies; and hence his works are comparatively little known. Of late years, he has forsaken the domain of poetry, and applied the resources of an acute and highly philosophical mind to studies more directly connected with his vocation as a teacher, infusing into these, however, much of that clear sunshine of fancy which lights up his poetry.

While the three writers last mentioned have undoubtedly been strongly influenced by the genius of Wordsworth, the theory of poetical composition announced in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, and so far illustrated by them, has produced a totally different result on another order of minds. The moral and reflective tone of Wordsworth has called forth a number of lyrical effusions, so deeply imbued with his spirit as to be in some cases merely the echo of his own thoughts; but his belief that the incidents and characters of common life were capable, even when reproduced in the most simple language and least ornate style, of awakening the emotions which poetry is designed to affect, has led to a conviction that the development of abstract truths do not limit the range of fancy; nay, that even political truths may very appropriately furnish themes for the poet. This expansion, for such we consider it, of the Wordsworthian theory, forms the basis of a large portion of such writings as those of Dr CHARLES MACKAY, or at least of his lyrics; for his *Salamandrine* and *Egeria* are of the purely fanciful order, and have as little to do with the practical as the *Undine* of La Motte Fouqué, to which the first of these two poems is in some essential particulars very much akin. Dr Mackay's earliest poem, *The Hope of the World*, evinced abilities which promised to add some notable things to our modern poetical literature; and the promise was not belied by *The Salamandrine*, a spirited and tasteful rendering of the fabled union of a semi-human nature with a denizen of our lower world. A sparkling and exuberant fancy, combined with much delicacy and tenderness, distinguish this poem. Amethysta, the heroine, is one of the sweetest and most beautiful conceptions in modern fiction, and the story has an originality which entitles it to be classed among the best of such compositions. In a subsequent volume, *Legends of the Isles*, Dr Mackay manifested a capacity for a still more vigorous style of composition; but it is through his *Voices from the Crowd*, *Voices*

from the *Mountains*, and *Town Lyrics*, that he is most generally known. In these little volumes, amid a good deal that is overstrained and somewhat bombastic, there are fresh fancies, and earnestness of purpose which entitle their author to high commendation. They may be said to constitute the poetry of progress, according to the ordinary acceptation of that term; for the prevailing spirit of them manifests itself in aspirations after freedom and the elevation of the masses of mankind. The well-known lyric, entitled *The Good Time Coming*, is a fair illustration of this, though hardly a poetical expression of the prominent idea running through the three little volumes. In a few lines designed to combat the opinion that science is antagonistic to poetry, that idea is brought out much more forcibly in far higher poetry. Dr Mackay pushes his argument so far as even to make the locomotive his Pegasus, contending warmly for the poetry of the railway and the giant Steam.

Blessings on Science ! When the earth seemed old,  
When Faith grew doting, and the Reason cold,  
'Twas she discovered that the world was young,  
And taught a language to its lisping tongue ;  
'Twas she disclosed a future to its view,  
And made old knowledge pale before the new.

Blessings on Science ! In her dawning hour,  
Faith knit her brow, alarmed for ancient power,  
Then looked again upon her face sincere,  
Held out her hand, and hailed her sister dear ;  
And Reason, free as eagle on the wind,  
Swooped o'er the fallow meadows of the mind,  
And, clear of vision, saw what seed would grow  
On the hill-slopes or in the vales below ;  
What in the sunny South or nipping Nord,  
And from her talons dropped it as she soared.

This is perhaps about as much as could have been said on the subject by a poet; but the author has higher strains than this, for notwithstanding his theory, it is very obvious that his finest lyrics are those which cannot be considered illustrations of it, or have at least a very remote relation to the practical.

The following stanzas, for example, are poetical in a far higher degree than any of those in which the author's 'progressive' sentiments are expressed. We quote from *Voices from the Mountains* :—

Thou who hearest plaintive music,  
Or sweet songs of other days ;  
Heaven-revealing organs pealing,  
Or clear voices hymning praise,  
And wouldst weep, thou know'st not wherefore,  
Though thy soul is steeped in joy,

## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

And the world looks kindly on thee,  
And thy bliss hath no alloy—  
Weep, nor seek for consolation ;  
Let the heaven-sent droplets flow ;  
They are hints of mighty secrets—  
We are wiser than we know.

Thou, who in the noontide brightness  
See'st a shadow undefined,  
Hear'st a voice that indistinctly  
Whispers caution to thy mind ;  
Thou, who hast a vague foreboding  
That a peril may be near,  
Even when Nature smiles around thee,  
And thy conscience holds thee clear—  
Trust the warning—look before thee—  
Angels may the mirror shew,  
Dimly still, but sent to guide thee—  
We are wiser than we know.

Countless chords of heavenly music,  
Struck ere earthly time began,  
Vibrate in immortal concord  
To the answering soul of man.  
Countless rays of heavenly glory  
Shine through spirits pent in clay,  
On the wise men at their labours,  
On the children at their play.  
Man has gazed on heavenly secrets,  
Sunned himself in heavenly glow,  
Seen the glory, heard the music—  
We are wiser than we know.

This is a fine expression of subtle feeling, and the last verse in particular conveys a high poetical truth. Dr Mackay rises to such heights in many of the lyrics contained in the three volumes we have alluded to ; while some of them, such as *The Poor Man's Bird*, and *The Light in the Window*, are pervaded by a deep and touching tenderness—an element by which poetry is always most likely to make successful appeals to the majority of readers. To his latest work, *Egeria*, Dr Mackay has brought the maturity of his powers ; it is well entitled to be considered a fulfilment of the promise put forth in his earlier poems.

Among the most successful writers in a style somewhat similar to that of Dr Charles Mackay, we can merely mention Mr CHARLES SWAIN—a sweet and graceful lyric poet, whose compositions are deservedly esteemed—Miss ELIZA COOK, and Mrs NEWTON CROSLAND, better known, perhaps, as Miss CAMILLA TOULMIN, both ladies of undoubted genius.

Among the female writers in modern poetical literature, none has attained to anything like the eminence of those of the



preceding age. Several of them—such as Mrs S. C. HALL, who occupies an honourable place in the world of letters, Mrs SOUTHEY, Mrs PRICE BLACKWOOD, Mrs NORTON, and Mrs DOWNING—will be remembered in connection with detached pieces of more than ordinary merit, some of which are not unworthy of being placed beside the finest lyrics of Mrs Hemans and L. E. L.; but with the exception of Mrs BARRETT BROWNING, none of them has written any lengthened work of note. Previous to her marriage with Mr Robert Browning, whose works we have already referred to, Miss Elizabeth Barrett Barrett was favourably known to the public through several poetic efforts of rather an ambitious character. Her first volume, containing *The Seraphim*, and several short pieces, gave evidence of very remarkable ability; and when, a few years after, it was followed by two volumes, containing a dramatic poem, entitled *The Drama of Exile*, a translation of the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, three or four ballads, and a number of other pieces in various styles, the accomplished authoress evinced the power of fulfilling her early promise. Amid much affectation, and a mannerism in some cases by no means agreeable, Mrs Browning's writings abound with poetry of a very high order. Her acquaintance with classical literature is extensive; but it is displayed in remote allusions rather than in the influence which it has exercised upon her own genius. Her mind is of a deeply serious tone, and her poetry is frequently of a sad and shadowed character. There is little of the sunshine of Parnassus about it, but it is pervaded by an earnest and thoughtful spirit. *The Drama of Exile* is a fanciful dramatic poem, which may be regarded as taking up the subject of *Paradise Lost* where Milton left it, and as dealing with the first ideas and feelings of Adam and Eve when 'the world was all before them where to choose their place of rest.' Satan or Lucifer, and the angel warders of the closed gate of Eden, are introduced in dialogues concerning the fall and destiny of our first parents, while snatches of song are sung by the spirits who salute them on their entrance into the world of sorrow and of trouble. These wild Æolian choruses are in some cases very beautiful, and full of a strange fitful music; but it is in the dialogues that the finest poetry is to be found. Here, for example, is a powerful passage, descriptive of the first effects of the Fall upon inferior animal natures:—

On a mountain-peak

Half sheathed in primal woods, and glittering  
In spasms of awful sunshine, at that hour  
A lion couched—part raised upon his paws,  
With his calm, massive face turned full on thine,  
And his mane listening. When the ended curse  
Left silence in the world—right suddenly  
He sprang up, rampant, and stood straight and stiff,  
As if the new reality of death  
Were dashed against his eyes—and roared so fierce

THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

(Such thick carnivorous passion in his throat  
Tearing a passage through the wrath and fear),  
And roared so wild, and smote from all the hills  
Such fast keen echoes, crumbling down the vales  
Precipitately—that the forest beasts  
One after one did mutter a response  
In savage and in sorrowful complaint,  
Which trailed along the gorges.

In a subsequent part of the poem, we find the following equally fine lines on the 'mission' of woman as the ordained instrument of smoothing the path of life and elevating the human nature which her temptation degraded from its original purity :—

Rise, woman ! rise  
To thy peculiar and best attributes  
Of doing good and of enduring ill—  
Rise with thy daughters ! If sin came by thee,  
And by sin, death—the ransom righteousness,  
The heavenly life and compensative rest,  
Shall come by means of thee. . . . Be satisfied.  
Something thou hast to bear through womanhood—  
Peculiar suffering answering to the sin,  
Some pang paid down for each new human life :  
Some weariness in guarding such a life,  
Some coldness from the guarded. But thy love  
Shall chant its own beatitudes  
After its own life working. A child's kiss  
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad ;  
A poor man served by thee shall make thee rich ;  
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee strong.  
I bless thee in the name of Paradise,  
And by the memory of Edenic joys,  
And by the blessed nightingale which threw  
Its melancholy music after us.

In much of her later poetry, Mrs Browning has departed from the simplicity and clearness of the lyrics published in her first volume, and seems in many instances to content herself with a mere outline of her subject. Still, that outline is often a powerful one, from the intensity manifested in such poems as the one entitled *Crowned and Buried*, in her last publication fancifully styled *Casa Guidi Windows*, a review of the Italian revolution of 1848, and in such verses as the following, called *The Cry of the Children*—a protest against the factory-system :—

Do you hear the children weeping ? O my brothers !  
Ere the sorrow comes with years,  
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,  
And that cannot stop their tears.

THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The young lambs are bleating in the meadows ;  
The young birds are chirping in the nest ;  
The young fawns are playing with the shadows ;  
The young flowers are blowing towards the west.

But the young, young children, O my brothers !  
They are weeping bitterly ;  
They are weeping in the play-time of the others,  
In this country of the free.

For all day the wheels are droning, turning ;  
Their wind comes in our faces  
Till our hearts turn—our heads with pulses burning,  
And the walls turn in their places.

\* \* \*  
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion  
Is not all the life God fashions and reveals ;  
Let them prove their inmost souls against the notion,  
That they live in or under you, O wheels !

And tell the poor young children, O my brothers !  
To look up to Him and pray ;  
So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,  
May bless them another day !

The most complete, in an artistic point of view, though by no means the most original of Mrs Browning's poems, is *The Lady Geraldine's Courtship*, portions of which glow with powerful expressions of passion. The structure of the verse, and, to some extent, the nature of the subject, however, suggest a comparison with Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*, which, as a whole, it cannot be said to equal, either in its poetry or the music of the verse.

Mrs Browning has more to unlearn than to learn, in order to render her poetry such as we might expect to receive from the genius which she unquestionably possesses. Her last work, to which we have alluded, is less affected by that mannerism which mars the beauty of some of her other productions, than might have been expected considering the nature of the subject; and there is therefore reason to hope that she will yet emancipate herself from it, so as to do justice to her rich endowments.

Less known, perhaps, than most of those we have alluded to, but worthy of notice as a strikingly original writer, Mr DOBELL, the author of *The Roman* and *Balder*, claims attention for the promise of great excellence which these works afford. The first was published some years ago, under the *nom de plume* of Sydney Yendys, and attracted considerable attention. It was accepted as a pledge of the author's ability to do greater things. A boldness of conception and vigour of expression, combined with passages of a forcibly dramatic character to give the impression of more than ordinary poetic power. The expectations thus excited have been so far

realised in the poet's recently published work *Balder*; but though consisting of 7000 or 8000 lines, this professes to be only the first part of a poem, to the completion of which the poet will probably devote the best years of his life. Its subject and plan, so far as these are developed, are not by any means either pleasing or clear; certainly not such as to secure for it anything like popularity in the ordinary sense of the term. It abounds with passages of great beauty and power, and is marked throughout by greater maturity alike of thought and style than *The Roman*. Professedly the record of a poet's life, and the wild chronicle of all his aspirations, moods, and fancies, dark thoughts and bright imaginings, it is worthy of a place among the better known works of its class—such as *Festus* and *Paracelsus*—a class peculiar in most respects to modern poetry.

MR PATRICK SCOTT is chiefly known as the author of *Lelio*; a work on perhaps too difficult and ambitious a subject, but studded throughout with fine passages.

We would fain make this at least a catalogue raisonnée of poets; but there are some whom it is difficult to bring in in their proper place, and this from mere mechanical reasons. To MR ALARIO WATTS, for instance, is due an eminent niche as a lyric poet; but his gems, though exquisite, are minute, and he has as yet brought forward no long poem to challenge by its bulk as well as genius the suffrages of taste. His *Poetic Sketches* and *Lyrics of the Heart* are full of genial and touching sentiments. An almost feminine tenderness distinguishes some of the pieces in these volumes; and the versification throughout evinces not only a delicate taste, but an ear attuned to the sweetest melody. Nor are his lyrics devoid of those touches of nature, in which are manifested loftier characteristics than those we have alluded to, as witness the following stanzas on *A Child Blowing Bubbles*:—

To share thy simple sports and sinless glee,  
Thy breathless wonder, thy unfeigned delight,  
As one by one those sun-touched glories flee  
In swift succession from thy straining sight—

To feel a power within himself to make  
Like thee a rainbow wheresoe'er he goes,  
To dream of sunshine, and like thee to wake  
To brighter visions from his charmed repose—

Who would not give his all of worldly lore,  
The hard-earned fruits of many a toil and care,  
Might he but thus the faded past restore,  
Thy guileless thoughts and blissful ignorance share?

Yet life hath bubbles too, that soothe awhile  
The sterner dreams of man's maturer years;  
Love, Friendship, Fortune, Fame, by turns beguile,  
But melt 'neath Truth's Ithuriel touch to tears.

Thrice happy child ! a brighter lot is thine :  
 What new illusion e'er can match the first !  
 We mourn to see each cherished hope decline,  
 Thy mirth is loudest when thy bubbles burst.

Mr T. K. HERVEY follows in a similar line, but his effusions are not of such universal acceptance as those of Mr Watts.

The writers who have enriched our periodical literature with poetic effusions of a marked and elevated character, are too numerous to be mentioned here, although we would distinguish among them the name of Major CALDER CAMPBELL. In the case of not a few of them, however, the Muse may be said to have been capricious in the bestowal of her gifts. Poems worthy of an established reputation, have frequently been lost sight of amid a mass of mediocrity; and only here and there could we point to individuals possessing just claims to be included in our present survey.

To the names of the female writers we have mentioned, must be added those of Miss MITFORD, Mrs GRAY, Miss JEWSBURY, Miss FRANCES BROWN, and Mrs MARY HOWITT. Miss MITFORD's poetry has been to a considerable extent cast into the shade by her other writings, but in her tragedies, *Rienzi* and the *Vespers of Palermo*, there is much that ought to be remembered; while in many of her lyrics there is the grace of poetical feeling, if not the fire of poetry in its highest sense. Mrs GRAY, whom we cannot now class among living writers, contributed, under her maiden name, MARY ANNE BROWNE, not a few pieces of striking beauty to our modern poetical literature—lyrics pervaded by the purest pathos, and often rising into strains of more than ordinary power, which the lover of what is pure and elevated in emotional expression cannot fail to admire. The volume of miscellaneous poems, into which are collected the lyrics contributed to the periodical literature of the last few years by Miss FRANCES BROWN, fully entitles its authoress to a place among the sweetest female writers of the day. Miss Brown's poetry is thoroughly feminine in its character, and its tone frequently reminds us of the tender grace which belongs in an especial measure to the works of Mrs Hemans. The themes are varied, and the versification almost always flowing and free; the language is always indicative of a cultivated mind—chaste and expressive. There are touches of feeling in some of her lyrics, too, which come to the heart with the purest influence of poetry. In the region of memory, Miss Brown seems to have found her chief if not her sole, though somewhat sad and shaded pleasures. It is of *May-day Memories*, of *What Time hath Taken*, and of the *Early Loved*, that she sings most sweetly. The themes with which she seems most familiar are those that awaken the recollections of other days, and open some long-closed floodgate of the affections. This is finely illustrated, we conceive, in one of

THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

her most simple, yet most touching poems, *My Childhood's Tune*;  
and chiefly in the following stanzas:—

And hast thou found my soul again,  
Though many a shadowy year hath past  
Across its checkered path, since when  
I heard thy low notes last!

They come with the old pleasant sound,  
Long silent, but remembered soon,  
With all the fresh green memories wound  
About my childhood's tune.

I left thee far among the flowers  
My hand shall seek as wealth no more:  
The lost light of these morning hours  
No sunrise can restore.

\* \* \*  
Thou hast the whisper of young leaves  
That told my heart of spring begun,  
The bird's song by our hamlet eaves  
Poured to the setting sun.

And voices heard—how long ago!—  
By winter's hearth or autumn's moon,  
They have grown old or altered now,  
All but my childhood's tune.

\* \* \*  
I greet thee as the dove that crossed  
My path among Time's breaking waves,  
With olive-leaves of memory lost,  
Or shed, perchance, on graves.

\* \* \*  
A simple strain to other ears,  
And lost amid the tumult soon;  
But dreams of love and truth and tears,  
Come with my childhood's tune.

These are simple verses, devoid, perhaps, of those things by which we recognise the higher order of poetry, but they are the heart's utterances—attuned with that inner music which genius alone can give us—a music that has filled the mind of the poetess with those images of beauty on which her eyes are almost wholly closed. Partially blind from her childhood, Miss Frances Brown has been compensated for the loss of perfect vision by those gifts which are seen in the delicacy and sweetness of her poetry. The verses we have quoted are given rather to shew the prevailing tone of her mind than as a specimen of her poetry, much of which is of a far higher character.—Miss JEWSEBURY'S writings are comparatively

little known ; from one of her finest lyrics, *The Stars*, we give the verses that follow :—

Stars ! on your canopy of state,  
The midnight sky serene,  
How oft a passion and a fate  
Have mortals in your beauty seen ;  
From him, the first Chaldean seer,  
To her who sitteth gazing here.

Deserts of air between ye strewn,  
As by the spirit viewed,  
Far off and many, and alone—  
Alone and yet a multitude,  
Shining o'er this world drear and dim,  
A band of silent seraphim.

The dying warrior, on the field  
His blood hath helped to gild,  
Looks upward, ere his breath he yield,  
And feels his early hope fulfilled—  
In spirit mounts the victor's car,  
And speaks in death of glory's star !

Even they, the tried of many days,  
The worn with griefs and fears,  
Who little on your beauty gaze,  
Dimmed nightly by the mist of tears ;  
Even they have spiritual dreams—for ye  
To them are worlds of memory.

Although, as a ballad-writer, Mrs MARY HOWITT has few, if any, equals among her female contemporaries, it is in connection with more simple themes that she is likely to be best known. Her descriptions of nature are full of a certain breezy freshness, and some even of her playful and unaspiring fancies will be longer remembered than her more elaborate productions. To those of her poems which are characterised by an airy freedom and simplicity belongs the *Birds in Summer*.

How pleasant the life of a bird must be !  
Flitting about in each leafy tree ;  
In the leafy trees so broad and tall,  
Like a green and beautiful palace hall ;  
With its airy chambers, light and boon,  
That open to sun, and stars, and moon ;  
That open unto the bright blue sky,  
And the frolicsome winds as they wander by.

How pleasant the life of a bird must be !  
Wherever it listeth, there to flee ;  
To go, when a joyful fancy calls,  
Dashing adown 'mong the waterfalls ;

## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Then wheeling about with its mates at play,  
Above, and below, and among the spray ;  
Hither and thither, with screams as wild  
As the laughing mirth of a rosy child.

What a joy it must be, like a living breeze,  
To flutter about 'mong the flowering trees ;  
Lightly to soar, and to see beneath  
The wastes of the blossoming purple heath ;  
And the yellow furze, like fields of gold,  
That gladden some fairy region old ;  
On mountain tops, on the billowy sea,  
On the leafy boughs of the forest tree,  
How pleasant the life of a bird must be !

In no department of modern poetry has there been so marked a deficiency as in that of the drama. The last ten or twenty years have not been altogether barren of dramatic literature, however, for although it has in most cases been cultivated without reference to stage representation, and therefore claims our notice simply as a form of poetry, there have been several successful attempts made to give the modern drama a direct relation to the modern stage. In some cases, it is true, the most effective plays are such as have very few of those higher characteristics which distinguished the dramatic compositions of a bygone age ; while in not a few instances, poetry of a high order, and even a strong infusion of the dramatic spirit, have been found insufficient to prevent decided failures in representation. The works of Mr WESTLAND MARSTON are to some extent an exception to this. As poems, they contain passages of great beauty, and two of them at least have been brought out upon the stage with considerable success. The appearance of his *Patrician's Daughter* was hailed as an event of some moment in the modern history of the drama. It was a successful attempt to make the conventionalities and the spirit of the age available for the incidents and passion of tragedy, and as such, it was in a great measure a novelty. It must be admitted, however, that not a little of its success was owing to the histrionic ability applied to its representation ; and that, like many other less successful works of its class, its excellences will be most fully enjoyed in the closet. The plot is illustrative of a high moral truth—the dignity of the human character as contrasted with mere conventional distinctions—and dispensing, of necessity, with those melodramatic effects of which a subject chosen from a more remote period would have admitted, Mr Marston has unquestionably produced a work of a very noble and elevating character. It will be sufficient for our purpose, we conceive, to confine our proofs of this to a few brief quotations from the dialogue, without entering at all into the consideration of the dramatic action of the tragedy. The entire scope of the author's design is explained in the following fine thought



expressed by the hero of the piece—the impersonation of the idea of manliness :—

There are homesteads which have witnessed deeds  
That battle-fields, with all their bannered pomp,  
Have little to compare with. Life's great play  
May, so it have an actor great enough,  
Be well performed upon a humble stage.

Other phases of the same truth are brought out in such passages as the following :—

However proud, or great, or wise, or valiant,  
The Lady Mabel's ancestors, that sun  
From age to age has watched their honours end  
As man by man fell off ; and centuries hence  
Yon light unto oblivion may have lit  
As many stately trains as now have passed—  
And yet my soul, orb of eternity,  
When yonder globe is ashes, as your sires,  
Shall shine on undecaying. When men know  
What their own natures are, and feel what God  
Intended them to be, they are not awed  
By pomps. \* \* \* \* \*  
Many a humble tenement wherein  
Great minds have wrought their task, and many a grave  
Inheriting their dust, shall be transformed  
To fanes and altars where the world shall worship.

Mr Marston's poetry is chiefly distinguished by the passionate expression of such truths as are illustrated in the above lines. It is full of strong human sympathies, and is flushed all over with the warmth of the poet's heart. There are incidents of the deepest pathos in all his works, and his dialogues abound with chaste and beautiful feeling. Here is one passage in which the poetry appears to us of a very high order :—

Had you, for sport,  
Trampled upon the earth a favourite rose,  
Pride of the garden—or in wantonness  
Cast in the sea a jewel not your own,  
All men had held you guilty of offence ;  
And is it, then, no sin  
To crush those flowers of life, our freshest hopes  
With all the incipient beauty, in the bud,  
Which knows no second growth ?—to cast our faith  
In humankind, the only amulet  
By which the soul walks fearless through the world,  
Into those floods of memoried bitterness,  
Whose awful depths no diver dares explore :  
To paralyse the expectant mind, while yet  
On the world's threshold, and existence self  
To drain of all, save its inert endurance.

Besides his dramas, Mr Marston has published a dramatic poem, entitled *Gerald*, and several miscellaneous pieces of unequal merit. In most of his later works, the idea which was originally illustrated in *The Patrician's Daughter*, may be said to have been reproduced in new forms, and in connection with new circumstances. The heart and the world in antagonism form the basis of almost all that he has written; but the impression of sameness is for the most part destroyed by the force and beauty of the poetry.

Mr TALFOURD, the accomplished author of *Ion*, *The Athenian Captive*, and *The Massacre of Glencoe*, may be said to belong to the period preceding that which our review embraces. His dramas, like those of Mr Marston, contain many passages of great beauty; but if we except his first one, *Ion*, they have not been very successful on the stage. We cannot, however, consider this the fault of the author; all the three works we have mentioned are of a high order of dramatic excellence, and as poems, we believe they will long retain the place they now occupy in our literature.—Mr HENRY TAYLOR, another distinguished writer of the same standing as Mr Talfourd, who has chosen the dramatic form of expression, will be remembered as the author of *Philip Van Artevelde*, when his later works, *The Virgin Widow*, and *The Eve of the Conquest*, are forgotten. In that poem, he put forth the matured strength of a vigorous mind, and took a place among the poets equal, at least, to that which he occupies as a thoughtful and vigorous prose-writer.—Sir EDWARD BULWER LYTTON also claims special notice among dramatic writers, as the author of *Richelieu*, *The Lady of Lyons*, and several other dramas of acknowledged excellence, which have been more successful in representation than those of almost any of his contemporaries. Long distinguished as a novelist, Sir Edward has published, in addition to his many works of prose fiction, and those we have named, two poems of considerable length—*The New Timon*, and *King Arthur*. The latter is unquestionably among the highest products of his genius, not even excepting the finest of his novels. Of a healthier tone than *The New Timon*, and with a subject better adapted in every respect for an enduring work of art, this poetic romance opened up a new phase of its author's mind, and exhibited something like a recoil from the misanthropic aspect in which he had previously regarded human nature. Profuse in imagery, and well sustained in the interest of its plot, *King Arthur* contains many finely conceived episodes. Here are two verses from one of them, in which the 'sire of chivalry' sees in a vision the dim outline of the present age of England's greatness:—

Mild, like all strength, sits crowned Liberty,  
Wearing the aspect of a youthful queen;  
And far outstretched along the unmeasured sea  
Rests the vast shadow of her throne serene;  
From the dumb icebergs to the fiery zone,  
Rests the vast shadow of that guardian throne.

THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

And round her group the Cymrian's changeless race,  
Blent with the Saxon, brotherlike ; and both  
Saxon and Cymrian from that sovereign trace  
Their hero-line : sweet flower of age-long growth,  
The single blossom on the twofold stem—  
Arthur's white plume, and Cerdic's diadem.

\* \* \* \* \*  
And in the heavens one rainbow cloud alone,  
Which shall not pass, until, the cycle o'er,  
The soul of Arthur comes to earth once more.

Among Sir Edward's shorter poems, there are several pieces full of high and noble thought, from one of which we give the following stanzas in answer to the question : *Is Life all Vanity?*

Life answers me, if ended here be life,  
Seize what the sense can give—it is thine all.  
Disarm thee, Virtue—barren is thy strife ;  
Knowledge, thy torch let fall.

Seek thy lost Psyche, yearning Love, no more !  
Love is but lust, if soul be only breath.  
Who would put forth one billow from the shore,  
If the great sea be—Death ?

But if the Soul, that great artificer,  
For ends its instinct rears from life, hath striven,  
Feeling beneath its patient web-work stir,  
Wings only freed in heaven—

Then, and but then, to toil is to be wise ;  
Solved is the riddle of the grand desire,  
Which ever, ever for the distant sighs,  
And must perforce aspire.

Among the very few successful dramatic writers whom we have not yet mentioned, Mr R. H. HORNE occupies a position second to none, though his works have never, so far as we know, been performed, nor are by any means so well known as those of Mr Westland Marston, or Sir E. Bulwer Lytton. His genius is of a very high order, but of a bold and impetuous nature, which has frequently led him to disregard the requirements of art. Hence his dramatic poems are unequal, and lack unity to some extent ; they do not, however, lack power. There are few things in modern poetry equal in grandeur of conception—a fearful grandeur, which awes us by its solemn intensity—to his *Death of Marlowe*, and his *Judas Iscariot*. The latter is full of sublime passages, powerfully passionate poetry, and displays a far higher and more complete knowledge of dramatic force than the more popular works we have alluded to. Nor are his *Gregory VII.* and his *Cosmo de Medici* less remarkable. They approach more nearly to the *actable* drama ; but their chief excellences can only be fully appreciated

through a perusal of them. That Mr Horne's works are not better known than they seem to be, has always appeared to us most unaccountable. All of them contain things worthy of the greatest poets of any age; and we have no doubt they will yet be more extensively appreciated.

Besides the works we have mentioned, Mr Horne has written an epic in three books, entitled *Orion*. The success of this, perhaps his most ambitious production, has been considerable, when its subject and structure are taken into account, for it has already gone through six editions. One of these its author published at the price of one farthing, with the view, we suppose, of testing public taste. Whether the circumstance of its having reached a sixth edition is to be held as proving the success of the experiment made at a farthing, we have no means of knowing; but certainly the poem is one worthy of a high place in modern literature. It is sustained and elevated throughout; the language is pure, and in some instances forcible; while many of the descriptions display a fertility of fancy equal to the energy which Mr Horne manifests in his dramas. There is one scene in the first book—where Orion steals in upon the slumber of his goddess love—which admits of being quoted almost entire, and is one of the finest passages in the poem. He stands at the entrance of the bower within which Artemis sleeps:—

There was a slumbrous silence in the air,  
By noontide's sultry murmurs from without  
Made more oblivious. Not a pipe was heard  
From field or wood; but the grave beetle's drone  
Passed near the entrance; once the cuckoo called  
O'er distant meads, and once a horn began  
Melodious plaint, then died away. A sound  
Of murmurous music yet was on the breeze,  
For silver gnats that harp on glassy strings,  
And rise and fall in sparkling clouds, sustained  
Their dizzy dances o'er the seething meads,  
With brain as dizzy stood Orion now  
I' the quivering bower. There rapturous he beheld,  
As in a trance unconscious of himself,  
The perfect sculpture of that naked form,  
Whose Parian whiteness and clear outline gleamed  
In its own hue, nor from the foliage took  
One tint, nor from his ample frame one shade.  
Her lovely hair hung drooping half unbound—  
Fair silken braids, fawn-tinted delicately,  
That on one shoulder lodged their opening coil.  
Her large round arms of dazzling beauty lay  
In matchless symmetry and inviolate grace  
Along the mossy floor. At length he dropped  
Softly upon his knees, his clasped hands raised  
Above his head, till by resistless impulse

His arms descending, were expanded wide—  
Swift as a flash, erect the goddess rose !'

This we conceive to be a very complete and beautiful picture, in which the warmth of life is finely blended with something of a classic chasteness of description. There are many passages throughout the poem which stand out in beautiful relief, and which the lover of what is pure and chaste in imagery cannot fail to admire. Here, for example, is a very fine personification of Morning :—

Haggard and chill, as a lost ghost, the Morn,  
With hair unbraided and unsandalled feet,  
Her colourless robe like a poor wandering smoke—  
Moved feebly up the heavens, and in her arms  
A shadowy burden heavily bore ; soon fading  
In a dark rain, through which the sun arose  
Scarce visible, and in his orb confused.

Often as Aurora has been described by the poets, we do not remember to have seen anything more original in its way than the above. This picture of Orion rising from the sea is equally effective :—

The luminous giant, clad in blazing stars  
In grandeur, like the birth of Motion, rose  
Towards his place in heaven.

Mr Horne's minor poems, with a few exceptions, are below the poetic standard which he has reached in *Orion* and his dramas. His genius does not lead him in the direction of the lyrical, and hence his shorter pieces are almost all too stiff and abstract. They want the music of his blank verse, and partake more of the character of rhymed thoughts than of pure lyrical effusions. All his excellences lie in the higher walks of poetry.

Occupying a somewhat similar position to that of Mr Horne, though not equal to him in imaginative strength, Mr JOHN EDMUND READE is still less known to ordinary readers. His collected works, published in 1852, comprise several long poems, which, though somewhat heavy as a whole, contain not a few noble lines. Mr Reade's sympathies are less forcibly excited by themes connected with ordinary human life than by the solitary and the remote. Although he has written in the dramatic form, his forte undoubtedly lies rather in the descriptive; and his descriptions in many cases lack that fulness of outline which we find in poetry dealing with themes similar to those which he has chosen. A lover of classic lore and of classic scenes, he lingers with evident delight in the cool grots and antique woods which the Grecian mythology has peopled with nymphs and dryads; and some of his pictures are not unworthy of such associations. A long poem, entitled *Italy*, though treating of subjects familiar to us from the works of Byron and Rogers, is well sustained, and in some passages powerfully written. The

following stanzas on Pæstum are worthy of the subject, and afford a very good idea of Mr Reade's reflective style of description :—

Pause here ; the desolate waste, the lowering heaven,  
The sea-fowl's clang, the gray mists hurrying by,  
The altar fronting us with brow unriven,  
Mates with the clouds, the mountains, and the sky ;  
But the sea breaks no more against the shrine ;  
Long fallen from his place the ocean deity :  
His worshippers have passed and left no sign.  
The shaker of the earth no more is held divine !

Spirit of gray antiquity ! thus throned  
With solitude and silence here, proclaim  
Thou shadowing o'er thine altar place renowned,  
Who reared that mighty temple ? From whence came  
The children of the sea ? What age, what name,  
Bore they who chose this plain their home to be !  
Arena meted for the race of fame ;  
For gods to applaud the deeds of liberty,  
Knowledge, and glorious art, that spring but from the free.

His lines on Venice are equally effective, and certainly among the best of the many descriptions of it we have seen :—

Yea, there she sleeps, while on the waters lying,  
Her spires and gilded tombs reflected shine  
Twilight's last lustre 'mid her shadows dying ;  
Silent and lone as a deserted shrine,  
Reared o'er the waves clear floating hyaline !  
Ancestral Venice ! younger powers bowed down,  
Deeming her ancient sway would mock decline.  
There still she sits, a queen without a crown,  
The fading halo of her past renown !

Mr Reade's tone of mind, or at least the light in which he surveys natural scenery and objects of historic memory such as those referred to in the quotations we have given, approaches more nearly to the spirit of Byron's poetry than is the case with any of his contemporaries. It will be obvious, however, that he has gone far beyond mere imitation. Both his faults and excellences are essentially his own ; and many of the latter will be found in such poems as the *Drama of a Life*, the *Ode to Memory*, and *Lines written on Doultling Sheep Slate* ; all of which contain passages of striking beauty.

Did our limits permit, we might here notice several poets of more than ordinary merit, who should properly be included in the class to which some of those we have just referred to belong. Some of these—such as Mr J. A. HERAUD—have been long before the public, but are very little known to general readers, while others—such as Mr COVENTRY PATMORE, Mr MATTHEW ARNOLD, Mr EDWIN ATHERSTONE, Professor AYTOUN—whose *Lays of the Cavaliers*

are full of force and spirit—and Mr R. W. JAMESON, are chiefly known in connection with single works of a striking character. *Nimrod*, a dramatic poem by the last-named writer, is perhaps the only notable work of its class which Scotland has produced for many years, and almost the only effort in the higher walks of poetry which has been recently put forth by a Scotsman, if we except the remarkable volume by Mr ALEXANDER SMITH of Glasgow, a very young man, who gives promise of high excellence when his naturally fine genius has been disciplined and fully matured. The appearance of this volume is too recent to receive the prominent place in the present sketch to which it is entitled. In Scotland, the poetry of the affections and the homelier phases of social life has not lacked its fitting representatives in such touching and simple writers as Mr JAMES BALLANTINE, Mr DAVID VEDDER, and others of the class, who have contributed several sweet lyrics to the poetry of their native land. There is one, however, who, though his writings are not of recent date, claims a more special attention than we can devote to those who are known only by occasional compositions: we refer to Mr THOMAS AIRD, one of the most original writers in modern poetical literature, to whose merits full justice has not yet perhaps been done. *The Captive of Fez*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, and, still more, *The Devil's Dream* and *The Demoniac*, are poems which the most distinguished of their author's contemporaries might be proud to own. Although Mr Aird has seldom attempted to apply his genius to the illustration of social manners, or the delineation of human character in its ordinary features, in that solitary region to which the imagination soars eaglelike and alone, he has few equals. Vastness and stern sublimity seem most to have affected him; and in breadth and vigour of conception, he stands almost alone among the living poets of Great Britain. There is a wild and terrible strength in his *Devil's Dream*, which renders it as a whole unique. The descriptive portions of it are pervaded by a severe and lonely feeling, and all the imagery is in fine consistency with the nature of the subject. The poem opens with the following lines:—

Beyond the north where Ural hills from polar tempests run,  
 A glow went forth at midnight hour as from unwonted sun;  
 Upon the north at midnight hour a mighty noise was heard,  
 As if, with all his trampling waves, the ocean were unbarred;  
 And high a grizzly Terror hung, upstarting from below,  
 Like fiery arrow shot aloft from some unmeasured bow.  
 'Twas not the obedient seraph's form that burns before the throne,  
 Whose feathers are the pointed flames that tremble to be gone:  
 With twists of faded glory mixed, grim shadows wove his wing;  
 An aspect like the hurrying storm proclaimed the Infernal King.  
 And up he went from native night, on holy sufferance given,  
 As if to strike the starry boss of the high and vaulted heaven.

THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

'Exulting o'er the rounded earth' the Arch-fiend rests upon 'the untrodden top of Asbeck high and white,' and then follows six lines of powerful description—each full of rugged vigour:—

Winds rose ; from 'neath his settling feet were driven great drifts  
of snow ;

Like hoary hair from off his head did white clouds streaming go ;  
The gulfy pine-woods far beneath roared surging like a sea ;  
From out their lairs the striding wolves came howling awfully.  
But now upon an ice-glazed rock severely blue he leant,  
His spirit by the storm composed that round about him went.

On this lone mountain-top reclines 'the form that bore in heaven  
the morn upon his brow,' and a dream of mercy visits even him.

A sound as of the green-leaved earth his thirsty spirit cheers ;  
And oh ! a presence soft and cool came o'er his burning dream.

While Aird's originality is undoubtedly best seen in such bold  
and majestic outlines as those of which this poem is composed, his  
sketches of natural beauty are full of sweet freshness; and the  
pathos of his lines on his mother's grave is of the purest and most  
touching kind. We can only give a portion of it, and the reader  
may be reminded of Cowper's lines on his mother's picture :—

O rise and sit in soft attire !  
Wait but to know my soul's desire—  
I'll call thee back to earthly days,  
To cheer thee in a thousand ways ;  
Ask but this heart for monument,  
And mine shall be a large content.

A crown of brightest stars to thee !  
How did thy spirit wait for me,  
And nurse thy waning light, in faith  
That I would stand 'twixt thee and death !  
Then tarry on thine awful shore,  
Till I have asked thy sorrows o'er.

\* \* \*  
I came not—and I cry to save  
Thy life from the forgetful grave  
One day ; that I may well declare,  
How I have thought of all thy care,  
And love thee more than I have done,  
And make thy days with gladness run.

\* \* \*  
I feel a hand untwist the chain  
Of all thy love with shivering pain,  
From round my heart ! This bosom's bare,  
And less than wonted life is there.  
Ay, well indeed it may be so,  
And well for thee my tears may flow !



## THE LIVING POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Thou car'st not now for soft attire,  
Yet wilt thou hear my soul's desire ;  
To earth I dare not call thee more ;  
But speak from off thine awful shore—  
O ask this heart for monument,  
And mine shall be a large content.

These extracts will suffice, we think, to shew that Aird possesses poetic genius in no ordinary degree, and of much more strength than that of many of his contemporaries. It is more than doubtful whether his poetry will ever be popular ; but that it will be better known and more highly appreciated by those who are capable of discerning its marked excellences, can scarcely be a matter of question.

We have thus noticed, more or less in detail—although probably with some accidental omissions—those of our living writers who are worthy of being considered the poets of the age, and from many of whom we may yet expect valuable additions to the literature of the century. Great poets, in the sense in which the term is employed to designate those who appear only at long intervals of time to mark the epochs of a national literature, those we have referred to can scarcely be considered ; some of them, however, have proved themselves capable of achieving greater things than they have yet given to the world ; all of them possess 'the vision and the faculty divine.'



possesses  
strength  
doubtful  
be better  
able of  
rather of

probably  
ers who  
nd from  
to the  
which  
it long  
, those  
them,  
reater  
ssess.



